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ABSTRACT

This document is the last of 10 reports resulting from New York's 1983 First Statewide Symposium on Rural Development and is intended to be used primarily as a resource document for the development of public policy proposals. The 9 preliminary reports generated discussion at 12 public hearings, plus written testimony, and served to catalog rural New York's strengths, define its problems, and establish goals to guide state policy development for the next two decades. This report begins with a discussion about working toward a "new" rural New York, provides comparisons of population change in rural/metropolitan New York counties and New York's rural population ranked with all state populations, and cites dominant themes and recurring issues found in the symposium proceedings and in public commentary. Each of the nine discussion areas is then addressed, beginning with a list of symposium workshop participants in that area and followed by an introduction. Selected quotes from the symposium proceedings are displayed beside public commentary on the same topic. The nine areas include: human services and community life; health care; elementary, secondary, and higher education; business, economic development, and employment; agriculture; environment, land use, and natural resources; transportation; community facilities, housing, and community renewal; and government and management. (BRR)

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ED255338

Rural New York In Transition

Report of the First Statewide Legislative Symposium on Rural Development With Public Commentary

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Senator Charles D. Cook, Chairman

January 1985

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Rural New York In Transition
Report of the First Statewide Legislative Symposium On Rural Development With Public Commentary

January 1985

This pioneering effort would not have been possible without the full support and interest of the Legislature and agencies of New York State. The Commission gratefully acknowledges the many natives and friends of rural New York who have contributed to its work. In reality, this is their report to the State Legislature and Governor.

STATE OF NEW YORK

LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON RURAL RESOURCES

The Commission on Rural Resources was established by Chapter 428 of the Laws of 1982, and began its work February, 1983. A bipartisan Commission consisting of ten state legislators from the Senate and Assembly, its primary purpose is to promote a state-level focus and avenue for rural affairs policy and program development in New York State. The Commission seeks to pool different knowledges and skills, to narrow areas of controversy, and to broaden areas of agreement. It is believed the enhancement of rural quality of life and institutions will lead to a healthier, more prosperous state.

The Commission provides policymakers with a unique capability and perspective from which to anticipate and approach large-scale problems and opportunities in the state's rural areas. In addition, legislators who live in rural New York are in the minority, with 31 out of 211 members. They look to the Commission for assistance in fulfilling their responsibilities to constituents, primarily in the areas of policy and program development, problem solving, legislative oversight, and funding.

The Commission seeks to amplify the efforts of others who are interested in such policy areas as human services and community life; health care; education; business, economic development, and employment; agriculture; environment, land use, and natural resources; transportation; community facilities, housing, and community renewal; and government and management. Clearly, the state's most vital rural resource is its human capital.

The Commission believes that the tendency to break up into narrow pressure groups can be a grave, disintegrating force in state policy and program development for rural New York. The number one challenge is to get diverse groups to work together, and to combine their efforts to the end that the people of this state may always have the highest possible quality of life, cultural, and material standards of living, without sacrificing their freedom. It is believed that only through joint democratic efforts can policy and programs be devised and administered for the state's rural areas which support and sustain each other in the public interest.

Dedicated to the Future Generation

The legislature hereby finds and declares that the economic and social well-being of the people of the state is clearly related to the state's rural resources. The rural economy and environment contribute greatly to the quality and maintenance of life in New York State. Rural areas offer an important alternative to urban living. New York's indispensible rural resources are decentralized, diverse and unique, and their enhancement and protection require special attention in view of their special characterization and needs.

A legislative commission on the development of rural resources is hereby established (1) to examine the impact of rural resources upon the state's economy; (2) to review existing laws and regulations as they pertain to rural resources; (3) to assess the effect of state policies generally on rural areas; (4) to reassess the effectiveness of programs specifically addressed to rural resource needs and problems; (5) to make such recommendations to the legislature for action as it determines necessary for the enhancement and protection of the state's rural resources.

Excerpted from:
Chapter 428 of the Laws of the
State of New York, May 13, 1982,
creating the Legislative
Commission on Rural Resources

Where there is no vision, the people perish.—

Proverbs 29:18 KJV

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Foreword

The Legislative Commission on Rural Resources publishes herein the final report of the First Statewide Symposium on Rural Development, together with public commentary. As U.S.D.A. Undersecretary Frank W. Naylor, Jr. emphasized at the conference, this effort has been a "first" not only for New York State, but for the nation as well.

The Symposium, held October 5-7, 1983, resulted in nine preliminary reports that were published by the Commission in the areas of: human services and community life; health care; education; business, economic development, and employment; agriculture; environment, land use, and natural resources; transportation; community facilities, housing, and community renewal; and government and management. These reports also served as the subject of discussion at 12 public hearings held by the Commission around the state and for written testimony submitted by interested people and agencies.

We have been extremely encouraged by the level of interest and action that has been stimulated by these efforts. The people need to know their government's policy and goals with respect to rural New York State. A vigorous rural development program requires substantial public commitment.

The purpose of the Symposium and the public discussions that followed, was to catalog the strengths of rural New York, to define its problems, and to establish goals that would guide state policy development for the next two decades. Neither the Symposium nor the hearings have dealt with strategies to develop the resources, address the weaknesses, or accomplish goals for rural New York. That will be the thrust of a Second Statewide Symposium on Rural Development to be held February 6-8, 1985.

State government must be encouraged to become more active in the development of rural resources. The assistance and stimulus which it can provide to local institutions and citizens groups is of great importance. State government has a major responsibility in planning and coordinating public services as well as in economic government. Within recent years, there has been a growing public interest in ways and means of increasing economic development and raising the quality of life in rural New York State. These are issues worthy of serious consideration by all people of the state.

For the moment, it has been our intent to foster as objectively and as exhaustively as possible, an understanding of where we are, where we are head-

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ing, and where we want to go. Such an approach is an important prerequisite to the development of effective and comprehensive strategies that will address the issues and concerns of rural New York. Indeed, this is a crucial step. When public policy fails, usually it is either because the strategies have been improperly formulated and executed or more often because the conditions and assumptions witn which we are dealing have been inaccurately and inadequately identified.

One of the most significant findings to emerge from the hearing process was the discovery of common themes that interconnect many public policy issues in rural New York. As too often occurs when public policy areas are viewed separately rather than together, individual elements are not seen as part of an integrated system in which developments in only one area may affect others.

The Commission has made a pointed effort to spur the thinking and involvement of grassroots interests in a positive, proactive manner. In retrospect, the public hearings have been an ideal vehicle to clarify the Symposium preliminary reports and to bolster support and awareness of rural New York in the state community.

The report is intended to be used primarily as a resource document for the development of public policy proposals that will be submitted in both houses of the state legislature on a bipartisan basis. These strategy proposals will be tested against goals, program structures, constituent needs, resources, values, and statutory considerations found at the federal, state, and local levels. Once again, as with the first Symposium, wide public input and reaction to these proposals will be invited. Above all, the Commission seeks to promote the exploration of workable new ideas that ultimately will be translated into a rural "blueprint for action." State initiatives will be emphasized, although this does not preclude a review of federal or local roles, private or independent efforts.

Readers of this document are urged to do their part in helping to develop rural development policy for New York that will enhance the overall quality of life over the next two decades. Your continued involvement in Commission activities is vital to the future development of one of the state's best kept secrets - rural New York.

Senator Charles D. Cook, Chairman
Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

Toward a New Rural New York

Rural and small-town life connotes more than any Census Bureau definition could possibly suggest. In a now-famous interview with a prominent magazine, the Mayor of the City of New York described the typical upstate New Yorker as "Pa" in his bib overalls and "Ma" in her calico dress riding in their pick-up truck to the nearby general store.

While that picture might depict an occasional glimpse of real life in rural New York, it certainly is far from typical.

Unfortunately, it is this Norman Rockwell image of rural America that shapes much governmental policy.

Particularly in those states which are dominated by urban populations, such as New York, the word "rural" is thought of as synonymous with "agriculture;" conjuring up images of picture post card landscapes peopled by pleasant, but not-too-bright remnants of the 1930's.

Indeed, agriculture is the single most important economic and social influence in rural New York; and indeed rural towns have succeeded in preserving some of the atmosphere and grace of an earlier day.

But the failure to recognize rural New York as an essential part of the state mainstream; or perhaps as a major tributary of that mainstream, has brought about the evolution of governmental policies which all too often ignore the needs of substantial portions of our state population and that display a metropolitan bias. Even in an urbanized state like New York, there are more than 3,000,000 rural people, exceeding the entire population of half the states in the union. Yet state policy has regarded this 20% of our populace as a virtual non-entity; or at least as an entity whose needs could be served, for example, by a part-time desk in some state agency.

Emphasis on the so-called "crisis of the cities" during the past three decades, has put the focus on the more vocal members of society with a compounding neglect of rural matters. Within Federal and state government, rural New York received a least-favored nation status. Consequently, rural New York State became both separate and unequal.

This cavalier attitude toward rural and small-town New York reflects a lack of appreciation for and sensitivity to the relationship between rural and metropolitan areas. The connection is often more direct than anticipated when, for instance, a grain export deal that is struck in some far off metropolitan center fails to consider how the produce will be shipped when there is a shortage of rail cars or trucking that are needed to get it to the shipping terminal.

Rural problems and opportunities consist of a complex set of human problems. Few state programs, however, have been carefully planned with analysis of rural market and community potentials, nor have they been evaluated satisfactorily. Without better planning, change may lead to the commonplace urbanization of the rural countryside, rather than to enhancement of the state's quality of life.

An ingrained urban bias is no excuse for being ignorant of what is going on in rural New York State. In fact, many preconceived notions about this sector of our state life can be dispelled by the cold facts. As in many other areas, conventional wisdom is often incorrect. The situation in rural and small-town New York is not as easy to pin down as it might seem. What seems the truth is often more myth than reality.

The convergence of the traditional rural New York into the state mainstream is a trend that began sometime after the end of World War II, and has continued at an accelerating rate into the present day. There has emerged a rural population which is in need of the same kind of government services as their urban cousins; yet the conduits through which those services must be delivered are patterned in an urban context and function poorly, if at all, to serve rural people.

There is a critical need for state and federal policymakers to recognize this important fact of life in the last quarter of the twentieth century. The federal and state reaction to the problems and opportunities of rural New York has been mixed. The situation in rural New York is more grave than healthy.

The interrelationships of economic, social, and demographic factors which are moving through rural New York, must be reckoned with. A balanced approach between rural and urban New York State is essential to the peace, prosperity, and welfare of all residents.

For example, while agriculture is and will continue to be the major economic underpinning of most rural counties, the growth of tourism as an economic force is rivaling farming in many areas. On the horizon are the potential growth of industries based on telecommunications. Factors such as lower-cost office space and the availability of competent and dedicated workers are a strong lure for the urban corporate center which may still maintain its front office in the metropolis; but which can, by the use of a few telephone circuits, run its back office from a remote location in the country. The potential influx of a new breed of white collar workers into the countryside is a possibility that we will do well to contemplate.

Another trend that is already underway is the growth of the retirement-age population in rural counties. In many areas, particularly those closer to metropolitan centers, this population growth of retired persons is nearing boom proportions.

In short, rural counties are growing with the influx of new kinds of population. Some of this population is a younger group, needing expanded opportunities for education, recreation, and housing. Some are older persons, requiring additional and diversified medical and social services, transportation, and community support capabilities. This influx places a strain on existing water and sewage systems, on supplies of natural groundwater, on governmental services, on fire and police protection, on educational institutions; and indeed, creates a tension with the existing undergirding of agriculture and other primary industries.

Examples of the inadequacies of present governmental policies are many.

In the area of physical services, such as water and sewage systems, the need to develop and support "down-size" systems is vital. A village of 1,000 people, faced with a $10,000,000 sewer project, confronts an impossible situation. The development of small-sized treatment plants is an important priority; and effluent standards should be examined to ensure that small residential systems are not confronted with the same tests as those with large industrial customers. Perhaps even more importantly, rural communities should be assisted in developing appropriate building code regulations so that sewage can be cared for in individual septic systems without endangering valuable and delicate sources of groundwater supplies.

In areas such as health care, regulations must balance "quality of services" with the equally important "availability of services." Higher standards of professional competence can mean a difference in many cases of medical emergency. Yet, the trend toward centralized medical facilities has brought about a virtual unavailability of medical services in many rural communities. Those rural hospitals which do survive, struggle with justifying their operation in a system which frequently bases certification upon numbers of procedures performed and numbers of patient days, rather than the overall requirement of the community to have the service accessible when it is needed. Furthermore, reimbursement policies militate against most rural hospitals by failing to recognize many of their costs. For example, a hospital may claim municipal water and sewer rents in their rates for third party reimbursement. If, however, they do not have municipal services available, and must maintain their own water and sewage systems, they do not receive reimbursement for those items.

Transportation policy is an underlying need for rural communities. Yet too many federal and state highway programs distribute funds on a traffic-count system rather than a system based on the functional needs of the roads. Thus, a parkway, carrying hundreds of thousands of passenger cars to and from the cities and suburbs, is funded handsomely, even though passenger cars cause little damage to roads. Conversely, a rural road, used primarily by farm trucks, school buses, emergency, and heavy delivery vehicles, qualifies for very little reimbursement even though it has very heavy maintenance costs.

Public transit monies are frequently made available only for specialized, narrowly-targeted populations. The small sums generated for each of the specialized functions is too small to have much practical value. Yet a comprehensive transit approach, which would effectively combine the various revenue streams, can offer at least a rudimentary public paratransit system for rural residents.

Similarly, deregulation of the transportation system threatens the availability of freight services in many rural communities. Those which are available are apt to be at a substantial financial premium compared with the larger urban markets.

Specialized educational requirements place a particular burden on rural schools. Programs for the handicapped and opportunities for the gifted and talented can be offered in urban districts through centralized programs. Rural schools, separated by hours of traveling time, must meet those needs in different ways. Hiring specialized teachers for smaller groups of children, or busing those children thousands of miles per year to obtain the necessary services, is an expensive and time-wasting system. We need to explore greater use of telecommunication techniques and cooperative ventures to extend equal educational opportunities to students in rural schools.

Agriculture must be protected and strengthened. Competition for prime agricultural land with the forces of residential and commercial development is a challenge which must be met. To tax a farmer's field on the same basis as the adjoining shopping center, is to announce to the farmer that he has no alternative but to sell to the next interested bidder.

In the process, agriculture is retreating off the prime river bottom land into the less desirable adjacent terrain. Reasonable policies to preserve prime agricultural land, along with the farmer's financial capability to maintain that land, is an urgent priority.

And perhaps, basic to all, is the need to diversify the rural economy. Specialized high-tech jobs, or seasonal employment in the tourist industry, cannot fulfill the employment needs of the less skilled and less educated worker. Encouragement must be offered for industries, particularly those utilizing indigenous raw materials. Not only must rural communities be able to provide the necessary public infractructure; but care must be taken to ensure that venture capital is accessible to the small entrepreneur. The trend toward statewide, and even interstate banking institutions, threatens the availability of credit for local investors. A strategy must be found to ensure that the small local borrower is not excluded from the board rooms of the conglomerate banks.

In all these concerns the need is not to invent new services, but to find a mode of delivery which is practical and efficient among scattered rural populations.

This can probably best be accomplished if the means are found by which services can be provided in a combined, rather than a segmented format.

Recently developed governmental programs have tended to aim at specific target groups. They have identified narrowly-defined needs and patterned specific programs to meet those needs.

In an urban setting, this may work well. In a city of 100,000, a particular need which affects 1% of the population would incorporate 1,000 people.

In a rural town of 10,000, the same program would cover only 100 clients, and might well be unfeasible, particularly if it requires highly qualified professional administration.

The need, therefore, is to develop a generalist approach; one which can deliver a variety of services to differing problem populations through a common administrative unit.

All too often, rural programs attempt to develop "catchment areas" for services in order to garner the necessary number of clients. The geographic expanse of such areas is apt to leave substantial numbers of people on the fringes with only marginal attention. Programs of integrated services can serve smaller geographic areas, and while they may suffer from the lack of a "specialist," there are some examples where interdisciplinary staffs actually give better service because they have a broader understanding of the problems they confront.

Development of effective rural policy is threatened by contradictory tendencies on the part of decisionmakers.

On one side is the tendency to think of rural areas as foreign countries, or at best colonies which are under the same flag but not really part of the central society.

On the other extreme is the tendency to recreate rural areas as "miniature cities" and and try to mold them into clones of metropolitan centers.

Neither approach is accurate; and both will bring equally unsatisfactory results. As the circle closes in, it is going to get more difficult to separate rural problems and opportunities from those that affect the majority of New York's population in metropolitan areas. Rural New York State is a minority, but an important minority.

Rural New York is. and will continue to be, distinct in its flavor, attitude, and pace of living. People who reside there will do so, accepting in large measure the balancing attractions and hardships they will encounter.

But rural New York is not static. It is not a throwback to the 19th Century. It is in transition.

Therefore, policies must be developed which will recognize at once the uniqueness of rural New York, along with its role as an organic and dynamic part of an integrated economic, social, and political fiber. Enchancement of rural life could lead to a larger, more prosperous rural citizenry. Metropolitan areas would benefit from a wider geographic dispersion of populations (less congestion and pollution) and a healthier state economy. The overall goal is to increase the earning power of individuals through education and training, to create jobs utilizing the skills and talents of persons desiring employment, to provide public services more efficiently, and to reduce environmental pollutions.

To accomplish that task effectively requires an understanding of where we are, where we are heading, and where we want to go.

We need to objectively and methodically catalog our assets and potentials while developing programs that will utilize the positive forces that already reside in our midst.

We need to recognize the forces of change which are at work, to define the problems and difficulties which such change will continue to make within rural communities, and to develop long-term strategies to blunt and divert the negative forces which could threaten who and what we are.

And most importantly, we need to have a vision of ourselves. It needs to be a vision that can sort out the conflicting forces of growth and change; so that as we make choices along the way, the building blocks we select will contribute toward a strong and attractive structure when they are fitted together.

To do this requires careful, informed guidance from caring professionals. But more importantly, it requires listening to the people who are rural New York.

While they may not be as articulate or succinct in defining their visions, it is the people who live in rural communities who seem to sense instinctively the relative values and conditions from which those communities have risen.

We will do well to listen carefully when they speak, and to fashion our policies in ways that will gain understanding, acceptance, and support from the people they affect.

None of this happens casually or quickly. It requires organization, patience, and a willingness to move methodically through a process of evaluation and analysis.

But it also will require, once the analysis is complete. a preparedness to forge ahead with decisive policy initiatives fashioned after the composite visions we have gathered.

It is a challenging and fascinating undertaking, and one with exciting potential.

Rural New York led this state into the nineteenth century and again into the twentieth. From this report one gets the strong sense that rural New York may very well lead the state into the twenty-first century as well.

In the long run, the success of rural development will depend on the adaptability and productivity of the people living in rural areas. For this reason, human resource development should be the cornerstone of rural development activities.

Clearly, the people and institutions of the state have been its greatest resource. They will be our real competitive edge as we move further into this new era. Their energy, shared vision, commitment, and resourcefulness will be vital as we make the required investments and seek the opportunities before us in dealing with change. These qualities and textures have been amply demonstrated by those interested persons and groups who have contributed to the development of this legislative commission report on **Rural New York in Transition.**

How well we do our job may well determine the quality of life for future generations who will seek the best our rural heritage can offer, but who also need and deserve the best that our modern social and economic structure can provide.

Maps and Charts

I like the heterogeneous nature of rural areas. I think it creates challenges. We have one of the largest rural populations in the United States, and I sometimes think that we don't consider that in our own decisions within the state, just because of the metropolitan image of New York State.

Charles Struble
Educator
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Olean Hearing

Rural populations are both varied and diverse, as much so as the populations of our cities and suburbs. The problems arising from a rural way of life are likewise complex and call for solutions that take note of conditions that are special to the people of rural areas. One difficulty is that many of the programs which affect people in rural areas are studied, designed, and administered by people who more often than not work and live in far distant cities such as Albany, New York City, and Washington, D.C. Answers to rural problems must generally be worked out by the people who live in rural areas or who themselves are informed and acquainted with rural life in the ways that it can be enriched in local or regional terms.

Craig Gilborn
Director
Adirondack Museum
Canton Hearing

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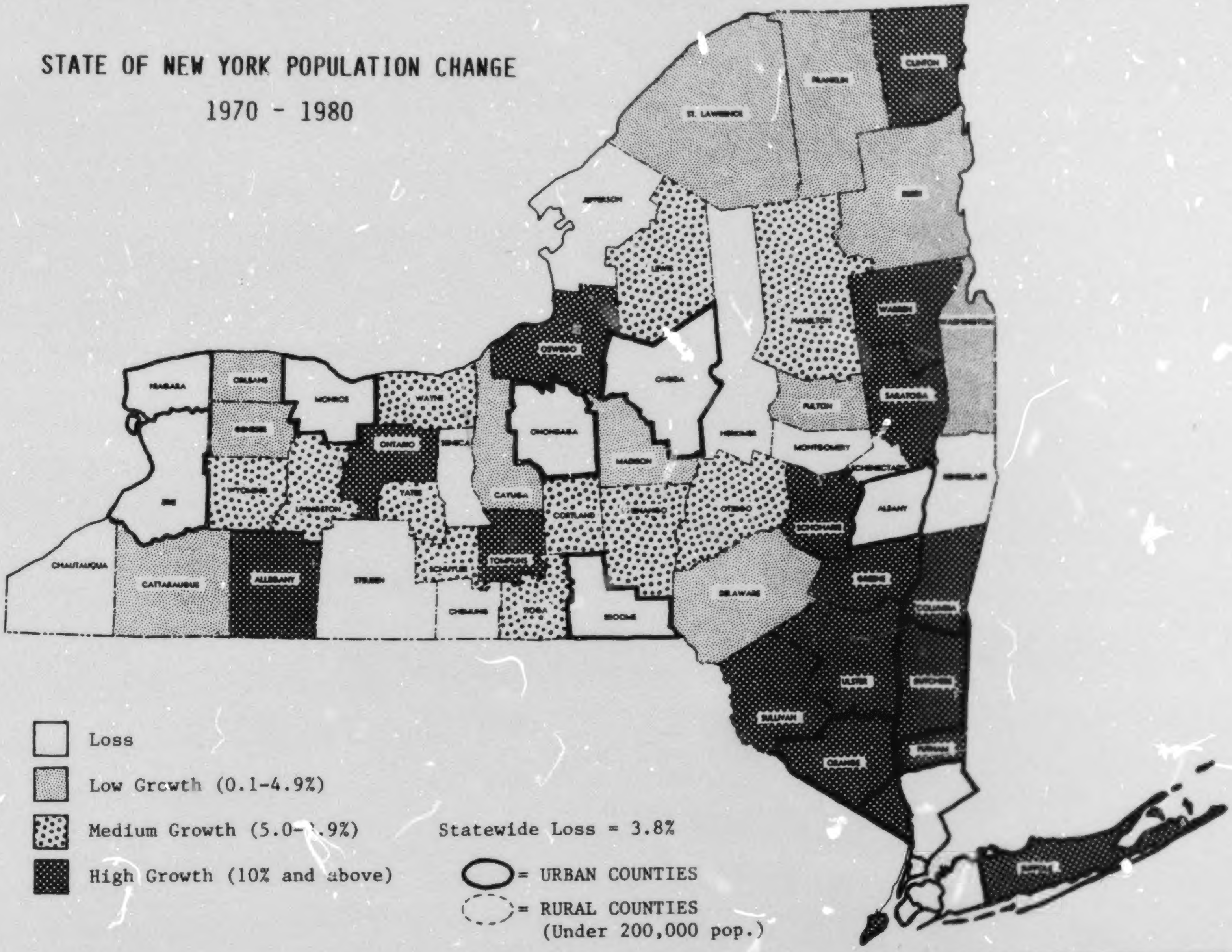
STATE OF NEW YORK POPULATION CHANGE

1970 - 1980


CLINTON
FRANKLIN
ST. LAWRENCE
ESSEX
JEFFERSON
LEWIS
HAMILTON
WARREN
WASHINGTON
OSWEGO
ONEIDA
FULTON
SARATOGA
HERKIMER
MONTGOMERY
SCHENECTADY
RENSSELAER
ALBANY
NIAGARA
ORLEANS
MONROE
WAYNE
GENESEE
ONTARIO
SENECA
ONONDAGA
MADISON
ERIE
WYOMING
LIVINGSTON
YATES
CAYUGA
CORTLAND
CHENANGO
OTSEGO
SCHOHARIE
TOMPKINS
SCHUYLER
CHAUTAUQUA
CATTARAUGUS
ALLEGANY
STEUBEN
CHEMUNG
TIOGA
BROOME
DELAWARE
GREENE
COLUMBIA
ULSTER
DUTCHESS
SULLIVAN
ORANGE
PUTNAM
SUFFOLK

☐ Loss

▨ Low Growth (0.1-4.9%)

▨ Medium Growth (5.0-9.9%)

■ High Growth (10% and above)

Statewide Loss = 3.8%

⬭ = URBAN COUNTIES

⬭ = RURAL COUNTIES
(Under 200,000 pop.)

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population and Housing.

RURAL NEW YORK'S POPULATION RANKED WITH ALL STATE POPULATIONS, 1980

Rank	Total Population	State
1	23,667,902	California
2	17,558,072	New York
3	14,229,191	Texas
4	11,863,895	Pennsylvania
5	11,426,518	Illinois
6	10,797,630	Ohio
7	9,746,324	Florida
8	9,262,078	Michigan
9	7,364,823	New Jersey
10	5,881,766	North Carolina
11	5,737,037	Massachusetts
12	5,490,224	Indiana
13	5,463,105	Georgia
14	5,346,618	Virginia
15	4,916,686	Missouri
16	4,705,767	Wisconsin
17	4,591,120	Tennessee
18	4,216,975	Maryland
19	4,205,900	Louisiana
20	4,132,158	Washington
21	4,075,970	Minnesota
22	3,893,888	Alabama
23	3,660,777	Kentucky
24	3,121,820	South Carolina
25	3,107,576	Connecticut
	3,088,546	**RURAL NEW YORK**
26	3,025,290	Oklahoma
27	2,913,808	Iowa
28	2,889,964	Colorado
29	2,718,215	Arizona
30	2,633,105	Oregon
31	2,520,638	Mississippi
32	2,363,679	Kansas
33	2,286,435	Arkansas
34	1,949,644	West Virginia
35	1,569,825	Nebraska
36	1,461,037	Utah
37	1,302,894	New Mexico
38	1,124,660	Maine
39	964,691	Hawaii
40	947,154	Rhode Island
41	943,935	Idaho
42	920,610	New Hampshire
43	800,493	Nevada
44	786,690	Montana
45	690,766	South Dakota
46	652,717	North Dakota
47	594,338	Delaware
48	511,456	Vermont
49	469,557	Wyoming
50	401,851	Alaska

Source: 1980 Census of the Population, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Dominant Themes and Recurring Issues

For some time now, the New York State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources has been working with the State College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at Cornell University in an effort to pinpoint social and economic trends in rural New York State.

That collaboration has resulted in a comprehensive report on present and future needs. According to Sen. Charles D. Cook (R,Delhi), the main conclusion of the study is that, "The vast and diverse human and physical resources found in rural areas are in danger of being abandoned or mismanaged through a lack of appropriate information for discussion in public policy forums."

More research apparently needs to be done to get a good handle on rural problems and solutions. But the study does note in the meantime that new forms of cooperation need to be developed between state and local, public and private ventures and that rural localities still lag far behind metropolitan areas in income, affluence, education, and employment.

Not surprisingly perhaps, such inequities result in higher rates of suicide, homocide, and marital disruption in rural communities. There's also a need, according to the study, for rural communities to control their own destinies more than they do now. Metropolitan-based institutions such as banks, insurance companies, and government agencies are dominating rural life. "This control over rural localities", says the report, "has lead to a feeling of frustration among various rural residents even as it may contribute to their well-being in other ways."

The great concentration of people in the urban areas has obviously resulted in some neglect of rural concerns. And yet without the land and its resources, the state would be in poor shape. It's to be hoped that this new study will lead to effective redress.

"Rural New York State
Needs Attention"
Editorial Page
Rochester Democrat and Chronicle
November 12, 1984

Dominant Themes and Recurring Issues

MORE FULLY UTILIZE EXISTING STRENGTHS TO OFFSET WEAKNESSES AND ADDRESS EXTERNAL THREATS OR OPPORTUNITIES

- New York State is in the midst of a striking transition to a postindustrial society where private and public services (education, health, finance, insurance, real estate, retail and wholesale trade, public administration, information, etc.) will increasingly form its dominant economic base. Many service industries already have become an integral part of its export economic base. Even in the state's rural areas, some 70% of the population is currently employed in the service economy.
    - How may the services employment sector provide a viable economic base for rural communities and what might be the consequences for localities if they are unsuccessful?
    - Are there ways rural localities may supply more of the input for services, business, and industry as opposed to importing these from metropolitan centers or from other states and countries?
- There has been a relatively large out-migration of highly educated people from the state, including rural young people. This trend represents a continuing loss of strength for New York. In rural areas, residents, particularly youth and minorities, leave primarily for improved job opportunities, in response to particularly acute problems of unemployment and underemployment in rural New York.
    - In what ways can the continued out-migration of highly educated rural young people and adults be mitigated?
- Most of the state's rural areas are located in relatively close proximity to one of the largest regional markets in the world: The New York metropolitan region and eastern megalopolis in which approximately 50 million people reside. Economic interests in other parts of the nation and world have penetrated this lucrative market with increasing success. Yet, many instances have been cited in which the state's economic development efforts have not adequately capitalized on rural New York's comparative advantage in this market.
    - What measures would assist rural localities in realizing their unused potential in serving the eastern megalopolis' market?
    - Can other markets be served by rural localities? What would be required to promote such economic development?
- Automation's impact on overall manufacturing (and some office) production employment is clear. Only the most optimistic of future-tellers is pre-

dicting that (in aggregate) the large U. S. companies will ever again create a single (net) new job. At best, only replacement jobs will be created and their numbers will decrease as managers allow attrition to accomplish increased productivity. In the last quarter century, U.S. employment jumped from 40 million to 103 million jobs, but fewer than two million of these were in manufacturing. By the year 2000, manufacturing employment is projected to comprise only 3% of total employment which is about where agricultural production employment is today. Significantly enough, of the net new jobs created in the future, analysts predict that 66% will be created by companies employing fewer than 20 people. In addition, 75% of net new jobs are currently being created by companies that have been in business less than five years. However, most small companies are only marginally profitable and are financially frail after compensating their owner-managers. This is a dilemma of great magnitude for rural areas since most of their employment growth and stability over the past three decades has been in small business units.

  - What can be done to help small and new businesses to continually improve and expand job opportunities in rural areas?

- The global market and economy is becoming more pervasive and integrated with components and services provided, assembled, and consumed world wide (e.g., The "World Car"). This trend is accompanied by an emerging world glut in many natural resources products, but natural resource-based items are a staple of rural New York's present economy.

  - In what ways should this trend be addressed since rural New York is more isolated/insulated from world markets than are metropolitan centers?

- Spurred by the emergence of a post-industrial economy, an entrepreneurial renaissance during the past decade has created virtually all new gains in national employment in this decade. Between 1977 and 1984 (new) annual business starts in the nation increased from 275,000 to 640,000. Venture capital rose from $1.0 billion in 1977 to $4.1 billion in 1983 as investments, spurred by tax incentives and a 29% annual growth rate in high tech, rose two and one-half times more than consumer spending. Women have been a significant force in this revolution with over one-third of new business starts headed by females, many of whom often have used the home as a launching pad. Historically, the entrepreneurial model has been a cornerstone of the rural New York economy with the family farm and merchant as the basic structural building blocks. However, the foundation of independent family farms and small merchants is rapidly crumbling in many rural areas.

  - Are there other potential models of rural entrepreneurial endeavor that will succeed in this new era, but which are not being adequately encouraged?

  - Where can the increasing number of women who endeavor to be entrepreneurs receive necessary support and encouragement in rural areas?

- The preservation and enhancement of natural resources and environmental health will continue to be a major concern in new and increasingly strong ways in all parts of the state. While the national focus has shifted from massive regulatory activity to bureaucratic dramas, state and local efforts to keep air, water, and land clean and safe and to increase their value to society have grown in intensity. There is increased recognition that the achievement of a healthful living environment and wise use of natural resources make sound economic sense. Yet, there are numerous problems cited with the potential to wreak havoc on the living and natural environments in rural New York.

  - How may the state's rural areas be assisted in their efforts to achieve environmental and natural resource protection and enhancement in ways that will produce maximum overall benefit to the state and its localities?

  - What new economic incentives may be helpful in the effort to enhance the living environment in the state's rural areas?

- With the emergence of the multiple-option family, the traditional family structure-model is undergoing a significant transformation. Accompanying this development is the rising influence of women who are reinventing working and motherhood. Virtually all women are expected to have a job with about 90% employed in the year 2000. Rural areas historically have been a stronghold for the family unit, and, conversely, this unit has been the cement for rural community life and structure. But, the non-traditional family has become commonplace in most rural areas as well. Indeed, over the last three decades the rate of increase of working women has been higher in rural areas than anywhere else in the state. As an example, today 60 % of family farm income is derived from non-farm employment and this is typically earned by the farm wife.

  - How might rural areas be assisted in their efforts to address the consequences of multiple-option families?

  - Are there ways that rural areas can offer an increased number of attractive career and public service opportunities for women?

- The "sun belt" continues to lure people in a population-business shift as momentous as the 19th Century migration of settlers who forged a nation stretching from sea to sea. Rural New York's "frost-belt" climate, while characterized by certain amenities, also has obvious disadvantages. They include increased energy costs, shorter growing seasons, and increased health and transportation costs associated with relatively long periods of sub-zero weather.

  - In what ways can rural New York capitalize on the strengths of its temperate climate while mitigating the weaknesses?

- Current societal emphasis on quality vs. quantity is expected to grow stronger and more widespread. Contributing factors are higher personal incomes, increased general affluence, and people seeking more permanency in their lifestyles during an era of rapid change. The increased number of urban retirees and second-home owners moving to rural areas is probably a reflection of this trend. It will likely shift the current primary emphasis on infrastucture to overall considerations of ambiance as a factor in personal and business locational decisions.

- Are there strengths in its living environment that rural New York should capitalize on in attracting people and businesses who are seeking a new quality of life ?

- Human capital is emerging as the most important strategic resource in the state's burgeoning information-service economy. The highly skilled nature of many information-related jobs and a growing "seller's market" for highly skilled workers will create a labor shortage crunch as early as 1986 in some fields. A continued increase in new business starts, a growing number of retirees, a prolonged decline of new high school graduates, and a matured, relatively more affluent baby boom generation all will contribute to a net loss of workers and increased demand for talent. Currently, young people are entering the labor force at half the rate of the previous two decades. Furthermore, the state's rural areas will be hit doubly hard if the current out-migration of skilled young people continues.

  - Are there consequences for rural New York in the impending shortage of skilled workers, professionals, and business managers that should be anticipated with plans for timely, appropriate responses?

- During the 1970's the state's overall population declined 4%, but its rural component increased 4%. It is not certain if this rate of increase in the state's rural population will be sustained. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that New York State's total population will decline by an additional 2.6 million people between 1980 and the year 2000, while state demographers argue that its population will grow. Of even greater significance to rural New York is the dynamic nature of its population changes. Localities are experiencing a shift in both the number and characteristics of their populations. Some are dealing with rapid population growth while others are finding a more stable situation. Almost all are experiencing a relatively high rate of growth in the proportion of their elderly populations. Those in close proximity to urban job opportunities are finding an influx of new families. Most rural areas are experiencing a net loss of well-educated young people. Coupled with population change is the impact of the trend associated with non-traditional families (single, young married, widowed, separated, and divorced persons maintaining their own places of residence). This has led to an increase in household formations, even in the wake of population decline. Indeed, 245,000 new households appeared in New York's metropolitan counties between 1970 and 1980, while 178,000 additional households were created in rural counties. Obviously, the rate of increase in new household formations per resident was much greater in rural areas than in metropolitan regions. These findings are extremely significant, particularly because such increases heighten the need for vital human services and accompanying delivery systems to reach isolated rural residents.

  - How can policymakers develop policies and programs that are responsive to the diverse population dynamics that are being experienced by the state's rural areas?

- A shift to more decentralized societal institutions and settlement patterns in the state and nation is paralleling the decline of heavy manufacturing industry as the dominant employer and "Washington" as the dominant force in national life. Historically, a decentralized society has been the natural condition for rural areas and this structure will be spurred toward the 21st century by modern communications technology and transportation developments. These forces will likely combine with an impending transformation of business and government to innovative structures blending the old highly centralized vertical patterns with smaller more horizontal networks. This shift reflects the need to break out of old straightjackets and to unload burdensome "overhead" costs, inflexibilities, congestion, and controls that are counterproductive, or unresponsive in a rapidly moving, increasingly pluralistic and complex information-service economy. Additionally, centralized government is under fire because public confidence has skidded sharply following two decades of many unfulfilled promises. State government and its subdivisions will probably have added responsibility for human welfare and community development, although they currently do not have the resources to administer these services. However, even at these governmental levels a sustained period of success will be required in order to regain public confidence.

  - Are there ways policymakers can devise new institutional and inter-governmental structures that are adaptive and less cumbersome in responding to rural needs and circumstances? Are there ways existing programs can be rationalized or innovative funding developed to meet added responsibilities?

- There is widespread and growing embracement of wholistic approaches and of individual responsibility in the enhancement of personal health and well-being. Such proactive measures as preventive health, environmental health, exercise, diet, and spiritual-psychological endeavors are not merely passing fads, but powerful means of extending life expectancy. Moving in step is the medical and genetic revolution that continues to strike down additional killer diseases and simple ailments. These trends could push up the cost of preventive and health care measures sufficiently to further reduce accessibility to such opportunities by lower income and rural citizens. The unfortunate result would be the creation of a stratified, two-class health care delivery system based on financial status of the individual.

  - Are the current threats to the maintenance and accessibility of quality health care for rural citizens simply the prelude to an impending crisis of even greater magnitude? What immediate steps should policymakers take in order to avoid a two-class health system in the state's rural areas?

IMPROVE LONG- AND SHORT-TERM PLANNING PROCESS AND PLANS, INCLUDING TRACKING OF THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT.

- One strength of rural New York is its growing diversity, yet this trend and the varying conditions experienced by its localities have not been adequately recognized or supported in public policy formation. Moreover, approaches that attack one particular aspect of a problem or opportunity frequently provide fragmented short-term bandaid solutions to long-term chronic situations.

- In what ways may policy, programs, and approaches be made more responsive to the diverse needs and strengths of the state's rural communities?

- How may diversity be promoted within regions that would add to the stability and quality of life of rural areas?

- How can the temptation to deal with immediate concerns in a piecemeal fashion be dealt with in those situations where the real need is for more comprehensive, long-range approaches?

- Almost every rural area seems subject to metropolitan-rural, integration-decentralization, control-participation dynamics. Trends in New York's rural areas are increasingly similar in a number of important ways to those occurring in its metropolitan regions, primarily because socioeconomic and technological changes occurring in rural localities make them more alike. Rural areas are becoming increasingly integrated with metropolitan areas because when people leave metropolitan areas to work, retire, or commute they bring their urban orientations with them. Rural areas in close proximity to metropolitan centers are experiencing the most rapid growth and strongest metropolitanization. Current responses to these dynamic influences on rural areas are inadequate. Moreover, rural growth has been largely undirected, resulting in increasingly haphazard settlement patterns and the disruption of a sense of community. It is in these areas that safeguards frequently are the weakest in the state.

  - What measures would lead to increased opportunities for rural citizens to make a personal impact on the life and institutions of their communities? What would improve self-sufficiency, initiative, and local control in rural localities?

  - Are there ways to devise a "rural quality of life strategy" that would assure equitable services in critical life systems, the enhancement of rural cultural resources and values, the enhancement of family farms, attention to the natural resource and environmental base, in order to provide a minimum standard of mobility for rural residents, enhanced educational and economic opportunities, and improved accessiblity to information and research services and resources essential to planning, management, and control functions?

CHANGE PRIORITY OR EMPHASIS ON CURRENT STRENGTHS, SERVICES, AND CLIENTELE AND REVIEW EXISTING BELIEFS, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND SYSTEMS.

- There is a need to develop cost containment policies, capabilities, and programs that do not overburden rural delivery systems but instead promote access to quality services. Increased tax burdens and a reduced share of Federal and state monies have hit rural residents and localities especially hard, due to their insufficient economic base and accessibility to outside funding support.

    - What state or local programs may be cut back or rationalized in view of increasingly scarce financial resources?

    - Are there ways to broaden local discretionary authority or to add incentives that will encourage innovative use of Federal, state, and local resources for problem-solving or service delivery as a substitute for overly prescriptive mandates?

    - How can inappropriate tax and regulatory structures be improved while continuing to serve the public interest?

- Rural populations have traditionally lagged behind more densely populated and affluent metropolitan areas in basic services and infrastructure. There has been a gradual deterioration and increased obsolescence of such items as local roads and bridges, water and wastewater treatment facilities, fire safety, and others vital to quality of life. Concurrently, there have been increased costs of construction and a decreasing share of Federal and state assistance in local efforts. Additionally, there are disparities in accessibility to quality human services, transit, and critical life systems.

    - Are there more equitable tax, revenue raising, and capital formation policies and programs to assist rural areas? In what ways can the use of state and federal aid received by rural areas be maximized?

    - How can application procedures for aid programs be simplified? How may the priorities and applicability of existing state and federal grant-in-aid programs be revised with respect to rural areas?

- How might policymakers recognize, support, and nourish "necessarily small" rural institutions where, for example, physical consolidation is an inappropriate course of action to follow? Where can policymakers encourage more flexible, appropriate funding mechanisms in support of rural localities and institutions?

- Rural decisionmakers and professionals encounter difficulties as they try to differentiate their delivery strategies from those of inappropriate urban-oriented approaches that are often pushed on them from above. On the Federal level, "Washington" looks on New York State as urban in its expanse and people. Moreover, most state policies and programs have mistakenly assumed that the application of metropolitan requirements and technical approaches would work in rural areas. Consequently, there has been a lack of acceptance or encouragement, particularly at the Federal and state levels, of alternative, innovative solutions to rural problems.

    - In what ways can greater compatibility and improved administration of Federal, state, and local regulations, codes, and standards be achieved? Should some program guidelines be defined differently for rural areas?

    - Rural areas require greater flexibility in the design and delivery of services; yet local decisionmakers have not been given sufficient latitude to create innovative program guidelines and solutions. What alternative approaches and technologies should be fostered in response to this need?

DEVELOP NEW CAPABILITIES AND RESOURCES

- Access to quality education, training, technical, and information resources is becoming an increasingly important building block for societal improvement. Yet rural areas, because of such factors as size-limited resources, dated infrastructure, and geographical isolation are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the modern challenge of a post-industrial information society. The marriage of computer and telecommunications technology will be a major thrust of socioeconomic and institutional change leading to increased information/problem-solving networking and physical decentralization of people and activities. Office automation, now a $28 billion dollar industry, is expected to grow 40% annually to a $500 billion dollar market by 1995.

    - How may equitable access to such modern technologies as computerized telecommunications and emerging office automation which combines text, data, graphics, video, and voice transmission in networked stations be developed and applied in serving rural needs and providing an attractive business environment?

    - What measures would increase the availability of educational and information resources that are individualized services/products, d

as well as provide more flexible delivery and life-long learning skills for rural residents and institutions?

  - Where can improvements be made in technology or management skills transfer as an avenue for rural development?

  - What measures would improve the technical, information, and research base available for policymaking, planning, management, and review with respect to rural areas? How can state government assure that rural localities have these capabilities in order to manage the resources and provide services in areas over which they have jurisdiction?

  - What measures would improve the supply and accessibility of trained individuals who can serve rural areas?

- There are many very small communities and institutions in rural areas where the aggregate size or demand is insufficient to support specialized or even basic activities, services, and facilities. Indeed, some isolated rural areas have a low tolerance level for wide and sudden swings in external financial support from either public or private sources. Additionally, even marginal overhead costs have a significant impact, thus making it difficult for most rural institutions to compete and/or offer services. Economies of scale are frequently less applicable which often raises the unit cost of services. Yet these realities generally are not given sufficient weight or consideration in Federal or state funding formulas.

  - What policies and programs would mitigate the difficulty encountered by relatively small rural institutions in gaining access to needed monies for improvement or expansion of facilities, products, or services?

  - Are there ways to promote greater responsiveness to specialized rural needs such as paratransit, while alleviating dependence on urban models, larger institutions, or expensive delivery systems?

- Rural people have experienced certain forms of relative deprivation affecting how much they earn, how they behave, and probably how they feel. A particular and subtle form of deprivation among people and institutions relates to participation in decisionmaking which controls the conditions and opportunities of rural life. Rural New York is increasingly dominated by management, control, and planning of metropolitan-based institutions and criteria, where participation by rural citizens is minimal if not nonexistent. A continuing eclipse of local governance, self-determination, and control is evident.

  - How can existing rural institutions be assisted in their efforts to offer creative, positive leadership in their communities?

  - What changes in existing rural/urban relations would encourage a continuing dialogue among rural and metropolitan institutions in which rural areas would have a more effective voice?

  - What measures would protect rural areas from becoming dumping grounds for metropolitan disposal of wastes and other problems in the battle to preserve existing resources and quality of life, while avoiding hazards to public health?

- Rural citizens generally have experienced a relative deprivation in socioeconomic status and personal well-being. Inequities have not been reduced effectively by past policies, although some improvements have been made. Median incomes and the proportion of families that are in affluence are lower in rural areas, as is the percentage of managerial and professional positions. A higher rate of unemployment, and probably underemployment of people is evident. Trends over the past 30 years, show the gap between metropolitan and rural areas has widened. These inequities have had negative effects on personal well-being and quality of life in rural areas as measured by increases in such behavioral consequences as a relatively higher suicide and domestic violence rate. Marital disruptions and homicides have increased markedly as have the feelings of rage, guilt, depression, helplessness, and frustration from which such behaviors arise.
    - As a result of rural-metropolitan inequities, how can policymakers increase investments in rural localities which produce reasonably large multiples for them?
    - In what directions can decentralization of some metropolitan functions to rural localities be guided to the benefit of all people of the state?

IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, INTER-INSTITUTIONAL AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- There is a trend toward increased reliance on new institutional arrangements, inter-governmental relationships, and public-private partnerships in providing services and products. Yet, Federal and state incentives do not appear to promote a coordinated use of scarce resources in rural areas. Additionally, the rural texture, while incorporating the admirable qualities associated with resourcefulness and self-reliance, can lead to an insular and parochial approach to the world that is self-defeating with respect to an increasingly pluralistic society.
    - What measures would promote greater cooperation and coordination between the many public and private institutions and service delivery systems in rural areas?
    - Are there ways policymakers may obtain a clearer picture and set of guidelines that will assist them in becoming steadier and more effective partners in a coordinated effort to preserve and enhance rural quality of life?
    - How can policymakers eliminate unnecessary duplication of services

and programs while facilitating the removal of barriers to state-local cooperation?

- State government and metropolitan areas have come to be viewed by rural localities as master-controller vs. partner-enabler, thus destroying effective inter-governmental, inter-institutional relations. State and federal recognition of, and responsiveness to, rural needs and issues has been ambivalent in recent decades, exacerbated by reapportionment and the urban-centered "Great Society" era. There is a general feeling of isolation, alienation, and powerlessness on the part of rural localities and residents in their efforts to deal with societal trends and such outside forces as developers, "experts," and state-federal bureaucracies. Additionally, relatively few existing state and federal agencies or resource groups have rural citizens and institutions as their primary constituency.

    - What measures would help establish greater trust and rapport between state and local governments, metropolitan and rural institutions?

    - How can abuses of the political weaknesses of rural areas, that threaten to destroy local participation, initiative, and innovation, be mitigated?

    - How can overly complex, disorganized, state laws pertaining to institutions, services, and programs affecting rural localities be improved?

    - Are there ways technical assistance can be provided to rural communities in a supportive, problem-solving manner?

Human Services and Community Life

Not long ago, I attended a meeting in Albany and discussed ways of making the Home Energy Assistance Program more available to needy people. The state agency staff person chairing the session asked me, "Why do you need all those neighborhood centers? Can't people just come into your main office?" My reply was, "My office is as far from some of the people we serve as your office is from the people in Poughkeepsie." To this day, I don't think she really believed me.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
  Development Program
Canton Hearing

If rural people want opportunities for their children near their homes, if they want people to settle and establish businesses in their communities, if they want to attract tourists and tourist dollars, then at some point these ends cannot be regarded as being separate from those conditions which bear on the quality of life available within the larger community.

Craig Gilborn
Director
Adirondack Museum
Canton Hearing

Symposium Workshop Participants

Moderator:

Assemblywoman Louise M. Slaughter

Resource Person:

Frank E. Havens
Chaplin, Director of Pastoral Services
Robert Packer Hospital

Facilitator:

Donald White
Regional Extension Specialist
Cornell University Cooperative Extension

Recorder:

Sandy Mathes
Director of Constituent Services
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Honorable Robert Estes
Delaware County Judge

Joan K. Gallo, Director
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Sister Elizabeth Giarusso
Community Organizer
Conserns-U

Elmer L. Lohmann
President, Pennsylvania & Southern Gas Company

Reverend Andrew M. McComb
Mid-Hudson Rural Migrant Ministry

Honorable William Moon
Commission of Social Services for Delaware County

Lucinda Noble
Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Janet Nevins Young
Vice President and Executive Director
Van Hornsville Community Corporation

Marcus Harazin
Director, Fulton County Office of the Aging

Introduction

State policymakers believe New York's small towns and countryside have provided its residents an alternative to urban living vital to their health and well-being, and to the quality of life for all people of the state. Yet, a growing number of people see trends underway that will significantly alter the landscape and fabric of rural New York.

The past 20 years have been marked by a period of benign neglect and urban bias for the state's rural areas. This situation, coupled with increased suburbanization (due to the increasing popularity of country living and improved accessibility to many rural areas) has triggered changes that threaten rural living as a valued alternative to life in metropolitan centers. An important trend affecting rural communities is the general breakdown of societal family structures, which have been a cornerstone of rural life. In addition, rapidly changing technologies in all fields are expected to have a profound impact on both rural and metropolitan communities. Evidence has also pointed to an increase in large corporate farming that appears to be occurring at the expense of, or as a substitute for, the medium sized family farm, an historic foundation for most rural communities.

Community support systems contribute greatly to the comfort and security of rural residents. These include strong roots and family ties, neighborliness, and visibly active community groups with strong identity and volunteerism components, such as churches, grange halls, and ambulance squads. The availability of real property and outdoor recreation, simplicity of lifestyle, and closeness to nature, promote a more affordable economic alternative for many wage earners or retirees. For many, there is an appealing sense of control over one's life, brought about by personalized education, a slow pace of life, and many opportunities to participate in community life.

Clearly, human relations, community, and family life have been the cement that holds the fabric of rural New York together. Yet, there are signs these strengths are being overshadowed by several weaknesses or problem areas.

Insufficient access and availability of personal services, while also a concern in metropolitan areas, is exacerbated by the geographic isolation of many rural residents. Thus, the current centralization of services that do not incorporate outreach, such as health care and education, could result in the denial or reduction of services to isolated or immobile rural residents.

Rural areas are limited both in quantity and quality of economic opportunity. Insufficient diversity of available job opportunities and relatively low pay scales force many rural young people to seek gainful employment in metropolitan centers. Below average incomes of the rural elderly and rising utility costs are critical concerns in rural areas. Many rural residents are heavily dependent upon government transfer payments for their income. Rising costs of living and government taxation impact heavily on the elderly and others with fixed or limited incomes. This problem is compounded by the relatively low ratio of people per unit of service as well as the limited availability, applicability, and usage of state and Federal resources in rural communities as compared to their urban counterparts. For example, limited use is made of the Federal rural passenger transportation funding in New York State.

Difficulties of many part-time local officials in dealing with increasingly technical and complex policy issues have been compounded by a general lack of citizen support for community planning in many rural areas. The need exists to facilitate the community planning process as a safeguard to community spirit and future quality of life.

Some rural natives fear or resent the newcomers who are moving into their small towns and countryside. Often viewed as disruptive of the established sense of community, the newcomers tend to place greater demands on local government and community services, even if they are not directly involved in community affairs.

A major goal for rural planners and policymakers is to ensure consideration of rural needs, community life, and resources in public policy forums and program development. The equitable treatment of a sizable component of the state's population who live in rural New York is at issue. Equally important, is the careful recognition by state policymakers of the crucial role rural areas and citizens will play in helping to determine the future economic potential and quality of life found in this state. The way of life and valuable resources offered by rural New York are vital to the state's future, just as they have been to its past success. However, these qualities would be destroyed if rural areas became mere clones of their urbanized neighbors.

How can policymakers achieve cost-effective use of resources in addressing the special needs of the people of small towns and the open countryside? Should they promote greater cooperation and coordination between the many public and private agencies and actors that serve rural areas? In addition, the successful modification of existing quality of life regulations will be of increasing importance in order to benefit all people of New York State, since some do unjust harm to rural citizens.

Clearly, human services and community life in rural areas is a complex and sensitive topic, and one that has proven most difficult to describe. Still, it may well prove to be the most important responsibility of all for policymakers as they seek ways to enhance those unique qualities and inherent strengths that make rural life valuable to a growing number of people in New York State.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends and Assumptions

- Increasing rate of growth in the rural elderly population, with current projections estimating this rate will exceed the urban elderly population growth rate by a ratio of 3 to 1 by the year 2010.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

In our communities, it's the people who have come in who have provided the manpower for our voluntary organization. Some of these organizations would not be there if it were not for some of the newcomers, and I would say that native people are more stay-at-home people who tend not to become involved in community affairs. As new people come in, these organizations have tended to grow.

Donna Burr
President
Schoharie County Farm
Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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The rural elderly are an ever growing percentage of the rural population who will need an increased level of services as they grow older. At this time, they represent some 17 percent of the rural population. By 1990, that figure will jump to approximately 25 percent of all rural people. The rural elderly suffer double jeopardy of being both old and rural.

Stockton Clark
Director
Rural Aging Services Program
New York State Office
of the Aging
Albany Hearing

If you live to the age of 80, you are usually pretty hardy. The young segment have come in and retired, their bodies break down, they have been on the go. As soon as they begin to relax, they find their bodies come apart and require medical attention.

Reverend Paul Engel
Pastor
St. Mary's Church
Middleburgh, New York
Delhi Hearing

We are no longer the Pepsi generation. What is happening is that we are seeing people aging in place. We are seeing people that at one time had enough of the world's goods set aside for

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Increasing demand for community and personal services (e.g., home health care).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

what they thought was going to be their retirement. All of a sudden, we have a female, aged 82, who is requiring a substantial portion of services. How do we best provide it? If she doesn't fall within the so-called poverty bracket, she is not going to be taken care of by Medicaid. We happen to have a number of people, who either by pride or by virtue of having squirreled away just a few more bucks, don't qualify for Medicaid. We must sit in judgment and play God and decide who should get the services.

Joseph Sears
St. Lawrence County
Office for the Aging
Canton Hearing

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It is imperative that the home health care needs be met for our elderly. The nursing home without walls concept must be financially supported by the state throughout the rural counties in order to deinstitutionalize persons who could live in their homes with various levels of assistance. The DRG mandates are going to create an overabundance of persons in need of follow-up and continued health care without an adequately prepared home health maintenance system unless something is done. This is primarily a rural problem, because there are, in most cases, no outreach of mental health therapy and other sophisticated medical care services that could be imported.

Thomas Briggs
Director
Delaware County Office
for the Aging
Delhi Hearing

The exception to the general pattern of underutilization of mental hygiene services in rural areas involves the services to persons with developmental disabilities. Nineteen per

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- General breakdown of family structure with accompanying pathologies and effects on community life.

- Homicidal rates in downstate metropolitan counties have more than quadrupled since 1960 where they are the highest of all New York counties. Rural rates, too, have increased, but they have not come anywhere close to reaching the high proportions found elsewhere in the state. Juvenile arrest rates in rural and metropolitan areas, however, are looking more similar now than previously.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

cent of the persons residing in state developmental centers and 25 percent of the persons in therapeutic licensed non-residential programs are from rural counties.

Irene Platt
Commissioner
Commission on Quality of
Care for the Mentally
Disabled
Albany Hearing

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There is sometimes child abuse involved with women who are victims of domestic violence. They are usually not the abusers; either the husband or the boyfriend is the perpetrator. Usually they threaten the children or have been abusing the children. Once they tell us, we are mandated to make the report. But what we try to do is have the mother report herself for allowing this to go on, or report the father or boyfriend. This is often a very difficult decision to make. I can't guarantee that if the abuse is serious enough, the children will not be taken from her, even though she might not be the abuser. I would like to see some system where people could freely ask for help without the fear of the terrible repercussions of having their children taken away.

Bobbi Doupe
Counselor-Coordinator
Delaware Opportunities Safe
Against Violence
Delhi Hearing

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Reported crime in New York State is down from prior years. Statistics for the years 1979 through 1982 from municipalities of less than 10,000 show a continual decline of events reported to the Division of Criminal Justice Services. In 1980 the decline was 1.2 percent. For 1981, the decline was 6.5 percent and in 1982 there was an additional decline. Hopefully, this trend will continue. If the F.B.I. report accurately reflects the New York picture, we can likewise expect an approximate 7

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The suicide rate, a measure of well-being, has been significantly higher in rural than in metropolitan counties for over three decades. Although the gap has narrowed, the suicide rate is currently 14 percent higher in rural areas.

- The domestic violence rate is currently 28 percent higher in rural than in metropolitan areas. Similarly, the rate of suspected child abuse and maltreatment is 21 percent higher.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

percent decline in Part I crimes, such as murder, robbery, burglary, assault, and motor vehicle theft in New York State.

Donald Chesworth
Superintendent
New York State Police
Albany Hearing

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Forty-eight percent of suicide victims have a history of alcoholism. Eighty percent were drinking at the time they committed suicide. Juvenile crime was also targeted as a problem in the report with a rate as high in rural as in metropolitan areas. One study of juveniles in detention centers found 39 percent had been arrested for alcohol-related offenses; of these, 43 percent were under the influence of alcohol at the time of their arrest.

Thomas Hadlick
Associate Director
Onondaga Council for
Alcoholism Addiction
Syracuse Hearing

I think the statistic that the suicide rate in rural areas is about ten percent higher than the average population is fairly accurate. Some of the issues of rural poverty, of lack of economic opportunity, of lack of services are related to this trend. Yet, that is not to say that pouring dollars into the situation is the answer to the problem. I think if we were able to respond to the general mental health problems of depression, domestic violence and sexual abuse in a broader kind of way, we might see a reduction in this statistic.

Stephen Dunham
Director
Delaware County Mental
Health Services
Delhi Hearing

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In New York State, there are one million alcoholics, of which only 2 percent are on skid row, who affect 3 to 4 million spouses, children, and significant others. Children of

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- The percentage of ever-married persons whose marriages are currently disrupted has increased dramatically in all areas of New York State since 1950. However, the rate of increase has slowed considerably in most rural areas during the past decade. The divergence in percentage of rural and metropolitan residents whose marriages are currently disrupted seems to be increasing.

- Growing integration of hospital services with other health and community service activities.

- Growing support for a wide range of the arts in rural areas (e.g., local and regional cultural resources are more widely supported and funded than in the past).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

alcoholics are four times as likely to develop alcoholism as are the children of non-alcoholics. As much as 80 percent of the spouse-to-spouse domestic violence in the United States is alcohol-related. One-third of child abuse and neglect cases are alcohol-related.

Thomas Hadlick
Associate Director
Onondaga Council for
Alcoholism Addiction
Syracuse Hearing

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In terms of incidence and prevalence of use, it is almost exactly the same with alcohol and marijuana among urban and rural youth. When you get into some of the other illicit drugs that are less available in rural areas, the prevalence drops with those drugs.

Thomas Hadlick
Associate Director
Onondaga Council for
Alcoholism Addiction
Syracuse Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- Community support systems contribute greatly to the comfort and security of rural residents (e.g., recreation programs for the rural elderly). Some services, for example, allow those in need of care to stay in their home/community environment. Other community support systems include:
  - Emphasis on neighborliness and concern for the individual;
  - Visibly active community groups with strong community identity and volunteerism component (e.g., churches, granges, volunteer ambulance squads, etc.);
  - Rural libraries are often providers of counseling services for under-educated adults, of opportunities to learn about local and regional history, arts and culture, and of information about community services, public affairs, and cultural events.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

What is commendable about rural living is that most everybody knows what the other person is doing. If someone does have a problem, oftentimes by word of mouth we will receive a referral and be able to tend to that particular situation. Only in cases where people live very far out and are totally isolated, have we experienced problems in reaching their needs.

Thomas Briggs
Director
Delaware County Office
for the Aging
Delhi Hearing

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Just a few of the vital human services provided by voluntary organizations in rural areas are: maternal and child health, preschool education and family services, rehabilitation and appropriate employment for the disabled, child abuse intervention and prevention, weatherization and low-income housing, public transportation, and legal assistance.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Program
Canton Hearing

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Libraries continue to carry out their historic role as the primary information sources in rural communities. With the local community the library is a place - a focal point - where activities, materials, and people come together. In many small communities, the library is the only public building other than the post office. In a small school, the library is often the place where students and teachers come together for creative, unstructured, multi-disciplinary activities.

Laura B. Chodos
New York State Board
of Regents
(testifying before) "Joint
Congressional Hearing on
the Changing Needs of Rural
America," July 16, 1984

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Economic attractiveness:
  - Availability of property and recreation at less than urban prices;
  - Simplicity of life style with less community emphasis on extravagance (including clothing, personal possessions, etc.).
- Sense of control over one's life:
  - Personalized education;
  - Lower incidence of crime;
  - Slower pace of lifestyle;
  - Sense of security and familiarity;
  - Opportunities to participate in local government and to make significant personal impact within the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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The quality of life in urban areas has deteriorated. I remember the first few years we were here, it was very difficult to attract professional people to the area. This has become less and less true. People associate with rural areas a quality of life, a quality of safety that is not present in urban areas. This is a very positive aspect to have in our favor.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths (cont'd.)

- Wealth of cultural resources throughout rural New York State, including rich and colorful histories. Strong and diverse folk heritages linked to many ethnic groups and native peoples, museums and libraries, art organizations, etc.

- Aesthetic values (qualities) which include:

    - Variety of topography;

    - Beauty of landscape;

    - Closeness to the earth;

    - Availability of native products (e.g., revival of country crafts and festivals).

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- The proportion of families in economic poverty has for many years remained higher in rural than in metropolitan areas. Similarly, rural areas have always had the smallest proportion of people in affluence.

- Insufficient access and availability of personal services, while also a concern in metropolitan areas, is exacerbated by the geographic isolation of many rural residents. Problems in providing services to residents are critical in such areas as: home health care and dental services; passenger transportation; child and family counseling (e.g., law enforcement agencies lack adequate counseling services for young, first-time offenders); homemaker services;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Many needy people are often reluctant to ask for help. Sometime's we'll go to someone's home who we thought needed help and they'll say, 'No, there's someone worse off then we are.' Very often the woman comes because her husband is too proud to say, 'I can't support my family.' It's a very hard thing for them to say, 'I don't have any food.'

Sister Nancy
Tioga County Rural Ministry
"Nuns Help Tioga's Poor"
The Binghamton Press
October 6, 1984

The impersonalness of agencies can sometimes make those in need of assistance feel as though they are groveling. We don't like to embarrass or give them the hard time some agencies would have to. We aren't boxed in by bureaucracy, so we can treat each case individually. It's not as though we say to people, 'If you're making so much money, we can't help you.' We don't have strings attached to our sharing.

Sister Kathy
Tioga County Rural Ministry
"Nuns Help Tioga's Poor"
The Binghamton Press
October 6, 1984

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In rural areas, residents have a real lack of anonymity. Everyone knows everyone else's business. This can intimidate a battered woman who decides against filing a police report or taking any other public action because she doesn't want the facts of her home life to be known and discussed by residents of the communities.

Debra Robinson
Schoharie County Abuse
Committee
Delhi Hearing

Victims of domestic violence who wish to file for a legal separation or divorce do not have access to lawyers very readily. This has presented a serious problem considering the fact legal services for low income people; low-cost housing; and centralization of services that do not incorporate outreach, which could result in the denial or reduction of services to rural residents (e.g., hospices and health maintenance organizations located only in metropolitan areas).

- Inconsistencies in community service needs and delivery. Need for further examination of geographically related rural areas in order to determine specific, necessary services. For example, inconsistencies exist in the nature, levels, and effectiveness of services for adolescent pregnancy cases in rural areas (including health care and family planning services, as well as family life education, job development, and remedial education programs). Also of similar concern are the needs of single, working-age mothers which may include other areas, such as greater availability of, and access to, day care centers for children.

- Lack of dependable passenger transportation services for the "transportation disadvantged" (poor, elderly, youth, single car families, etc.) that provides a valuable link to other services in the rural community. This problem is especially critical since 50 percent of rural households have only one vehicle and 11 percent have none.

that we many times encourage women to take serious legal steps to solve the problem.

Bobbi Doupe
Counselor-Coordinator
Delaware Opportunities Safe
Against Violence
Delhi Hearing

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Child care is lacking in many parts of the rural areas of our state. This creates an additional burden for mothers who are attempting to work outside the home and support themselves away from an abusive relationship.

Debra Robinson
Schoharie County Abuse
Committee
Delhi Hearing

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Victims of battering are often kept isolated from the rest of their family or friends, whether in rural or metropolitan areas. However, in rural areas, that isolation is increased because of distances they have to travel to seek help. Maybe even the nearest house could be a couple miles down the road. If the woman screams, perhaps no one will hear her.

Debra Robinson
Schoharie County Abuse
Committee
Delhi Hearing

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In our community, there is a crisis intervention team which is of some assistance. A fact of life, however, is that recently one of the best people on the team found it necessary to resign because of his case load with mental health and then being called out quite often for crisis intervention. He found it was impossible to continue to function in the double role. I thought he was a very good trained counselor, but also active in intervention for suicide. There is a kind of stigma attached to going to a mental health clinic for counseling, but we

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Difficulties encountered in providing community/personal services:
  - Rural service providers often feel isolated, and are frustrated by the lack of support services and limited budgets. Providers are often forced to eliminate some existing services so that other services may continue;
  - Rural programs are often costlier due to the dispersed nature of the rural population. However, the high cost per unit of service delivery is not adequately factored into existing funding formulas;
  - Transportation needs for service delivery which require an increasingly large share of limited budgets;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

don't have any other avenues.

Reverend Paul Engel
Pastor
St. Mary's Church
Middleburgh, New York
Delhi Hearing

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Funding sources seem to assume that rural areas require less money to combat family violence based on smaller populations and smaller case loads. Consequently, rural programs have access to few local funding resources, either governmental or private. The bottom line - operating expenses - results in a higher cost per client served. Thus, a funding agency may be more inclined to allocate money to urban areas for a larger population base. It shows cost-effectiveness and supporting a larger number of people served. Many grants at the family violence program level are funded for only one or two years, and it is difficult to establish credibility in rural communities in such a short time. Just as credibility develops, the funds are cut off.

Debra Robinson
Schoharie County Abuse
Committee
Delhi Hearing

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Although police in rural areas are concerned and cooperative in fighting domestic violence, specifically spouse abuse, they are often unable to respond effectively due to logistics. Also, police response may be inconsistent. Diverse police forces are not trained together and individual police officers may be unfamiliar with new legal developments which pertain to family violence. Some kind of uniform response policy for all law enforcement agencies would be helpful.

Bobbi Doupe
Counselor-Coordinator
Delaware Opportunities Safe
Against Violence
Delhi Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Standards and requirements that are too restrictive and prevent local providers from coordinating and/or developing creative cost-effective solutions to service delivery needs;

- Informal support systems are not adequately utilized in the delivery of services, especially in the areas of home care and transportation. Recognition, support, and utilization of informal support systems by formal service providers may be slow;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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One of the problems for my professional staff in conducting in-service training for other agencies is that we have not received any reimbursement. The way the Department of Mental Hygiene has funding structured in the state is our only source of revenue. There are increasing demands placed upon us to raise revenues by conducting reimbursable units of service rather than doing the traditional kinds of community mental help things that might address a particular issue. We are being pushed from both ends.

Stephen Durham
Director
Delaware County Mental
Health Services
Delhi Hearing

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The 1960s and early 1970s saw the out-migration of young skilled workers from the Northeast down to the factories in the Sun Belt and other parts of the country. The loss of the young skilled work force also meant the loss for the rural elderly of their sons and daughters who now reside in other geographic areas of the country. This means that many of the rural elderly, contrary to popular belief, do not have an informal support system composed of blood relatives to assist them with shopping, transportation, home repairs, personal care, etc. This has been a cause of great isolation and lack of any support group for many rural elderly. While there has been a gradual repopulation of rural areas, not only by young professionals but also by elderly people who are retiring to their summer homes, these former urban dwellers are used to public services readily available at their disposal. People must do for themselves in rural areas. This is very confusing to the elderly who have moved into rural areas from metropolitan ones.

Stockton Clark
Director
Rural Aging Services Program
New York State Office
for the Aging
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Willingness of rural residents to provide voluntary personal services, such as home health care, may not be the problem. Ability is often the issue, stemming from a lack of knowledge, time, and financial resources. This results in less than optimal assistance and may create feelings of inadequacy, resentment, and frustration in the care provider;

- Lack of incentives for the coordination of resources commanded by the multiplicity of service providers located in rural areas;

- Lack of formal organization of volunteer services within many rural communties. Volunteer services provided by religious and other service groups are often informal and on a case-by-case basis. Delivery is usually not made in a routine or contractual fashion, which means people who need assistance may not be aware of existing services or how to obtain them. In addition, providers may have difficulty in accurately identifying community needs;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Voluntary organizations share the problem of providing vital services in spite of continuing barriers erected by the state of New York. These barriers fall within three areas: urban assumptions, urban-oriented regulations, and inadequate resources.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Program
Canton Hearing

Alcoholism is a far bigger problem than drugs in rural areas. One of the things that makes it harder for us to deal with this problem is that, particularly in the smaller communities, everyone knows everyone else's business. Although we have the services available, we have a difficult time getting people to accept those services. Many times the probem of teenage alcoholism can be traced back to alcoholism problems in their home environments.

Charles Smith
Superintendent of Schools
Andes, New York
Delhi Hearing

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Volunteers are afraid of retaliation by members of the family that are terrorizing the wives or children. It is difficult to find people willing to take the risk involved. Providing a safe home seems to be one of the best solutions in rural areas, but that means actually taking someone into your home. It's hard to maintain the secrecy of where a particular family is being housed and an abusive spouse may show up at the door. Transporting a woman and her children to a town in another part of the county is possible, but that increases the cost of transportation, as well as removing the woman from her friends and any supportive community she might have.

Debra Robinson
Schoharie County Abuse
Committee
Delhi Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

  - Shortage of qualified professionals in such service fields as health care and difficulties in attracting them to locate in rural areas.
  - Greater demand for written documentation adding to the burden of excessive paperwork and record keeping, in addition to relatively slow response times for funding and/or materials from the state (e.g., problem of non-acceptance of Medicaid patients by many rural health care providers may be due to low fee schedules, burdensome paperwork, and bothersome audits associated with the program);

- Lack of cultural and social activities for youth and other members of the community and a reduction in availability of community organizations which once provided "family" activities (e.g., law enforcement agencies lack adequate counseling services for young, first-time offenders);

- Inadequate economic opportunity:

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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The Adirondack community of Dannemora has been searching for a doctor without success for some months. An article in the March 10 issue of the New York Times explored the difficulties of obtaining a physician who is willing to settle among the town's 10,000 residents. These citizens are so desperate they are renovating a house where a doctor would live and practice medicine rent-free. The wife is part of the problem, according to the owner of a Dannemora pharmacy. The pharmacy owner was quoted as saying, "Doctors are happy no matter where they go but the wife is different. She says, 'There are no theaters, there is no tap dancing. I want to be next to an area where there is more culture, where there is a college I can take courses at.'"

Craig Gilborn
Director
Adirondack Museum
Canton Hearing

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We do not know why thousands of youths choose to die. Many people blame drug and alcohol abuse. Others see such abuse and suicide as related symptoms of much more basic problems in our social fabric. Family dynamics, shifting value systems, increased personal freedom and responsibility, the complex demands of our society on adolescents – all are said to contribute to suicidal behavior. Parents who have lost a child to suicide express frustration in trying to warn others that suicide knows no geographic, economic, or social barriers. It is not limited to "problem kids;" it could strike your family tomorrow.

Alfred D. DelBello
Lieutenant Governor
State of New York
(quoted in) New York Times
September 12, 1984

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The job market is very limited in a rural area, and this may increase stress in the home if the

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Rural areas are limited both in quantity and quality of economic opportunity. Such factors as insufficient diversity of available job opportunities and relatively low pay scales, force many people to turn to more densely populated metropolitan centers for gainful employment;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

husband is unemployed. It also makes it difficult for a woman to leave knowing how hard it would be for her to find a job or if she does leave, not being able to get one may mean she will return to a troubling situation for economic reasons.

Debra Robinson
Schoharie County Abuse
Committee
Delhi Hearing

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There are waitresses in large, resort restaurants who are only paid $50 a week, and may earn another $50 in tips. They have no other income. It's such a sad situation that is raging out of control in many small towns.

Ms. Joslin
Resident Landowner
Warren County
Troy Hearing

The rural poor are a bit less savvy than the urban poor, many of whom know how to ask for help from social agencies. Poor families living in the county tend to be more independent of agencies. Instead, they rely on a network of nearby friends for aid. Yet, more than 300 people stood in line for cheese and butter last winter. It caused a traffic jam and signaled a mild victory. Word had spread about free cheese. Outreach was reaching out.

Outreach isn't sitting in an office. Some of my clients are happier than my friends who have money, And they are always very giving. There's always a cup of coffee for me, even if it's the last one.

Pat Bodgettt
Outreach Worker
Cayuga County Action Program
(quoted in) Syracuse Post-Standard
"Isolated Poor Find a Friend in
Outreach Worker"
April 30, 1984

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People are not only living longer, but they are

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Below average income of rural elderly as compared to their urban counterparts and lesser ability to find employment for supplementing fixed incomes;

- Lack of employment opportunities may encourage some people to work "off the books", denying them benefits of minimum wage, unemployment insurance, or compensation coverage.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

for a longer period of their lives, more healthy, more active and more alert than ever. There is even some evidence that other intellectual capacities remain unchanged or actually improve with age in healthy elderly individuals.

The weightiest argument against the forced retirement law is that it denies responsible, adult citizens the same right to work that every other adult enjoys. Though perhaps well-intentioned, the forced retirement law is nonetheless an abhorent intrusion of paternalistic government into the private affairs of its members.

"The Right to Work"
Editorial Page
Albany Times-Union
March 7, 1984

Older people can do the same types of jobs younger people can do. They have the maturity an experience younger people lack. There are a number of rural residents with marketable skills they simply need to brush up on. Older workers are more flexible and able to work part-time hours.

Kathleen Laramie
Director
Clinton County Office
  for the Aging
(quoted in) Plattsburgh Press Republican

"Older Worker Training Offered"
June 2, 1984

With diminished capacities to provide Medicare in rural communities, many elderly patients may regress. Needed rehospitalization and placements may be an even greater problem than the physical demands upon the state institutional system. New program initiatives must be made to assure that adequate prevention, education, and outreach as well as the on-site needs of the elderly are met. Without strong and aggressive community-based outreach and treatment programs, increasing numbers of our elderly will face unnecessary institutionalization through default.

Stephen Durham
Director
Delaware County Community
  Mental Health Services
Delhi Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Rising costs of living and government taxation impact heavily upon the elderly and others with fixed or limited incomes.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

As socioeconomic indicators have pointed out the financial status of many rural residents is generally lower than their metropolitan counterparts, this fiscal catastrophy is even more debilitating to the elderly. The rural elderly have no real opportunity to acquire gainful or additional sources of income and employment. In addition, the elderly are often "stuck" in their milieu and cannot emigrate in order to alter or alleviate their economic plight.

Janice Henderson
Director
Franklin County Office
for the Aging
Malone, New York

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We can generalize not only about the tremendous poverty and isolation of the rural elderly but also the current inability of our service systems to meet the tremendous demands for transportation, health care, housing, and the variety of supportive services that are and will be required in order to maintain our elders in the rural communities they wish to remain in.

Stockton Clark
Director
Rural Aging Services Program
New York State Office
for the Aging
Albany Hearing

The cows we sold are gone. What little we received from them is also gone, and in our particular situation, we have no other nestegg. I haven't drawn a Social Security check yet. Maybe I should talk to my congressman. I would hate to bother him because there is too much of this, "Gimme, gimme, gimme, I need, I need, I need." In the meantime, the premium notice has come for Medicare. My wife sends the money in. I say, "Why pay it? Wait until we get the money from them." She says, "No, we've got to keep

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Perception of serious economic risk to the rural poor and elderly as a result of spiraling energy costs.

- Continued affordability of utilities presents an important concern in rural areas (e.g., the loss of telephone service and escalating costs through deregulation, which for some elderly shut-ins may be the only means of access to outside services. This situation could easily place the more isolated rural residents in an extremely vulnerable position);

- Limited availability, applicability, and usage of state and federal resources:
    - Inadequate use of state transit funds in rural areas (e.g., mass transit funding);

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

our record clean." See, the wheels turn, and you've got to turn with them, regardless of how you feel.

Edward Bauer
State PX Chairman
Steuben County Farm Bureau
Olean Hearing

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The Home Energy Assistance Program is effective in providing assistance to a large proportion of those who are eligible for this program. Yet, it is not very effective in alleviating their financial burden. I also question why there are no federal and state income tax credits for woodburning units and accessories, and I ask this on behalf of a rising percentage of elderly and homeowners in rural areas.

Thomas Briggs
Director
Delaware County Office
for the Aging
Delhi Hearing

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Our county Office for the Aging was so frustrated with the federal funding in transportation that we were forced to raise monies locally through a fund drive for a single bus just to make available to people a limited service to our 9,000 elderly, spread out over an area of 1,400 square miles. This, as you can appreciate, is hardly adequate. We still have a high percentage of isolated elderly not able to get to needed services who are totally dependent on relatives or volunteers for transportation.

Thomas Briggs
Director
Delaware County Office
for the Aging
Delhi Hearing

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Our county's Community Development Program and the people it serves were nearly denied

- Multiple funding sources with different regulations and requirements which predetermine how funds may be spent (e.g., service restrictions in geographic areas that could be served, variations in eligibility criteria, as well as inconsistencies in definitions of elderly and handicapped populations);

- Local use may be limited by inadequate knowledge of existing programs, the inability of municipalities to deal with central bureaucracies, as well as some degree of cultural resistance to the use of government funds. This serves to dampen local initiative and enthusiasm for state and federal programs. Additionally, poor community perception of large government bureaucracy may stem from concern over additional financial burdens placed on the community to continue services when grants expire;

participation in the recent Emergency Food and Shelter Program. The regulations first published by the state's Department of Social Services would have prohibited participation by any organization with elected public officials or members of their family on its governing board. Now, in rural New York, service as an elected public official is largely a voluntary job which is filled by some of the community's best informed citizens. It would be madness to try to implement a countywide program without their support and without their information. While we were fortunate in getting that particular regulation changed, the same prohibition is still part of the regulations of the Divison of Housing and Community Renewal.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Program
Canton Hearing

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In 1981, the Community Development Program received an annual grant of $183,000 to operate its 12 neighborhood centers, maintain an effective and accountable central administration and maintain such programs as weatherization for which the state does not reimburse the full costs of operation. By this year, that annual support from the Community Services Block Grant had declined to $112,000, not enough to maintain existing services, let alone respond to the increased need as more and more families slipped below the poverty line. The state's own Communtity Services Block Grant Advisory Council has proposed a way of dealing with this problem. However, that proposal seems to be in limbo because, as a friend in Albany informed me, "It's not very high on anybody's priority list, except poor people's."

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Program
Canton Hearing

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Up until now, we had given federal funds on a weighted formula basis - the elderly population,

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

  - Inequitable allocation of state and federal financial resources allows certain areas to receive greater funding. This is because aid formulas are heavily dependent upon the financial resources of the community (such as the size of the tax base), and its ability to obtain matching funding. The "numbers game" makes it difficult to qualify for programs based on "numbers of potential clients";

- Lack of participation in community planning.
  - Local resistance to the concept of planning. Generally, many rural municipalities do not fully understand the importance of proper planning to the community as a whole. The need exists to facilitate the planning process in local government.
  - Technical services are not utilized to their fullest potential;
  - Need for trust-building between state government and its localities, especially in rural areas.

their isolation, whether they live alone, the poverty, the minority numbers. When we looked at the money available ($2.2 million), we decided to go the grant route for the first time. To divide that amount among all the 62 counties in the state would have been impossible, so we made it competitive. State officials looked at several key factors in the county requests, including clearly identified need, program design, and the capacity of the county to deliver.

Edward Kramer
Assistant Director of
  Community Services
New York State Office
  for the Aging
(quoted in) The Binghamton
  Evening Press
October 22, 1984

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Our agency is each year more increasingly involved in meeting the needs of newcomers or people who have moved permanently into their secondary homes. The majority of these people, being from metropolitan areas, are totally naive about the unavailability of support services in county. This friendly belief will continue as we can expect the current land boom to continue in all parts of our area. I personnally feel tht we are looking at a much larger entry than our demographics predict, and we are totally unprepared and ill-equipped for this influx and the consequent demand for services.

Thomas Briggs
Director
Delaware County Office
  for the Aging
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Disruption of sense of community due to the growing influx of new people and moving away of natives:
  - Inadequate communication between natives and newcomers, and occasionally between neighboring municipalities;
  - New residents working outside the community place greater demands on community services, yet are often not involved in community affairs.

- Aesthetic values are a major part of the attractiveness of rural areas. However, abuse of the political weakness of rural areas threatens to destroy this major attribute.
- Minorities:
  - Lack of public awareness and consideration of ethnic/racial perspectives in rural policymaking decisions (e.g., migrant farmers);
  - Need to develop greater sensitivity to and acceptance of an increasingly pluralistic society, especially in "fringe areas experiencing frequent contact with the urban environment.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There is little exchange between natives and newcomers in rural areas. If anything, there is a lack of understanding. There's the classic line, "What do you do all year - hunt turkeys?"

Michele R. Pinard
Long Lake resident
(quoted in) Watertown Daily Times
"Effects of Tourism on Culture
of Adirondacks Cited"
June 25, 1984

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A greater problem than providing adequate services for new rural residents is to protect the people who have spent most of their lives in rural areas.

Mary O'Donnell
Representing Robert D. Smith
Presbyterian Minister
Schoharie, New York
Delhi Hearing

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Tourism isn't always the economic panacea it poses to be. You have the psychological trauma that goes with unemployment. We all know the winter hardship of alcoholism, unemployment and welfare dependency. Tourism can also reduce the life chances of some people whose goal becomes 20 weeks of employment to draw unemployment payments the rest of the year. There is no desire to gain other skills. People who have political influence in rural areas don't live here. We're at the mercy of people who have a different perception of the woods than we do.

Michele R. Pinard
Long Lake resident
(quoted in) Watertown Daily Times
June 25, 1984

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The great unevenness in per capita funding for library services is a serious equity issue the places rural communities in double jeopardy because of the uneven distribution of other economic and cultural resources and inadequate

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Underdeveloped information networks.

- Rural libraries require additional resources in order to meet both increases in library use and growth in the range of demands made on them as community information resource centers. Demand continues to increase for information on jobs and educational opportunities, technical journals and periodicals, and microcomputer training.

- Library resources and services are less well funded than those available in metropolitan areas:

  - Library costs are escalating throughout the state, yet rural libraries must devote nearly a third of their budgets to operating costs as compared to only 22 percent spent by metropolitan libraries. Attempts to reduce operating costs often result in fewer hours of operation and reduced access to library resources;

  - Few rural libraries are automated and able to provide modern services taken for granted in most urban libraries (e.g., timely book traces and rapid access to shared resources. A number of rural libraries do not even have telephones);

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

local tax bases in those communities. Library bookmobile and school bus drivers can attest to the deprivation and poverty in many rural communities. This is a serious national and global problem that is compounded by the invisibility of rural poverty.

Senator Larry Pressler
(R-South Dakota)
(testifying before) "Joint
Congressional Hearing on
the Changing Needs of
Rural America"
July 21, 1982

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It is an anomoly that the rural library, in spite of its history and potential, is threatened. Local libraries are struggling for fiscal support and survival. The New Federalism places unprecedented pressures on the local tax base. Increased postal and telecommunications costs threaten delivery systems. Energy costs hit rural libraries with devastating force.

Laura Chodos
New York State Board of Regents
(testifying before) "Joint
Congressional Hearing on the
Changing Needs of Rural America"
July 21, 1982

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In 1983, the New York State Police, only one of approximately 800 police agencies in New York State, handled 43,570 felonies and 106,751 misdemeanors and other lesser offenses. Recognizing that our primary jurisdictional area is rural and suburban New York, we can conclude that indeed there is a serious crime problem within our area of responsibility.

Donald Chesworth
Superintendent
New York State Police
Albany Hearing

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We have many elderly people in our community who

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Underdeveloped communications availability in rural areas. Although New York state is a strong supporter of public broadcasting, public television cannot be received by 12 percent of the homes in the state, and public radio cannot be heard by 25 percent of New York's residents. Importantly, signals cannot be received in rural areas deficient in opportunities to enjoy a wide variety of cultural experiences. Moreover, the use of public television is underdeveloped as a resource for school curricula in rural New York.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

are bored with life. They haven't even heard of Meals on Wheels. They're 20 miles away from that kind of project.

Ms. Joslin
Resident Landowner
Warren County
Troy Hearing

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City people have an idyllic view of life in the country. It is a beautiful life - and that's why most farmers stay with it. They love it. But it is also tremendously exhausting and stressful.

Getting farmers to come to workshops on stress, however, is not as easy as getting the urban neurotic into analysis. Farmers in general have a hard time sharing their feelings. There's a superman image that no matter how hard things are, they'll muddle through somehow. Among farm families there are a lot of problems caused by stress - mental illness, divorce, and suicide.

Farmers are reluctant to open up to a mental health professional or clergyman because those people usually aren't familiar with our way of life; they don't talk the lingo of farmers. They have never been up to their knees in manure.

Arlene Shako
Farmer/Sociologist
Schoharie County
(quoted in) The New York Times
"Solutions Sought for Rural
Stress
February 9, 1984

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS
Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Many small museums and historical collections in rural New York are inadequately or under- exhibited because of limited resources. There is strong need for museum development and technical support services, and increased cooperation among regional organizations.

- Funds available for regranting through the locally administered Decentralized Program of the New York state Council on the Arts are widely acknowledged to have improved access to cultural activities in many rural areas. Yet, only 18 out of 44 rural counties have contracts with the Council to receive regrant funds, and competition among applicants for available monies is fierce.

- Need for technical assistance in management and development for small, locally supported arts organizations lacking those capabilities.

Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Ensure consideration of rural concerns in public programs and policy decisions.
- Encourage individual participation in governance.
- Promote expansion of rural networking in order to address targeted needs at the local level (including the encouragement of cooperative program development among service providers).
- Remove unnecessary barriers that limit local government from solving local problems.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I find it is a real fertile area for involving newcomers to rural areas by involving them in groups.

Reverend Paul Engel
Pastor
St. Mary's Church
Middleburgh, New York
Delhi Hearing

As part of a rural quality of life strategy, I recommend that the State of New York first inventory the existing health and human service delivery capability that exists in rural voluntary, private, nonprofit organizations; review the existing regulations and correct unnecessarily urban-oriented constraints; provide adequate resources for rural health and human services; and finally, take appropriate credit for the savings gained by using nonprofit organizations as cost effective and efficient deliverers of needed health and human services.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Program
Canton Hearing

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Rural elected officials and planners need all types of information to make more effective decisions for the community. Development information dealing with demographics and the economy, as well as information dealing with roads, soils, topography, and wildlife needs to be available for sound decisionmaking.

Wesley Maughan
Director
Community Development Programs
University Extension
Utah State University
(testifying before) "Joint
Congressional Hearing on the
Changing Needs of Rural America"
July 21, 1982

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By quality of life, I do not mean bringing ballet or chamber music to small upstate towns.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Foster rural culture and values.	That presumption flows precisely out of those values which too long have been dictated by informed, well-meaning urbanites as to what rural New York should receive in the way of cultural benefits. At the same time, I would ask that those of us who live and work in rural areas not commit another similar error, which is to assume that the satisfaction of art or culture is of little or no importance when compared to the demands of everyday life. There is an impoverishment of spirit and imagination which can have tangible consequences, including ones detrimental to the economy and health of our rural communities. Underlying the incidence of drinking and births among teenagers in rural areas is a poverty that frequently - I am not saying always - has less to do with family income than with an inability to discover and explore the world that is, was, and might be. Craig Gilborn Director Adirondack Museum Canton Hearing
• Ensure quality of access to modern library services and to New York state's information resources for rural populations.	The local library continues to provide the most meaningful access point, the human interface, which is the vital link in the communications process. The mystique of the machine and the complexity of information delivery structures must be adapted to - not alter - the traditional library staff and local governing board. New telecommunications systems must involve significant participation of representatives of rural libraries who are familiar with the real needs of the communities they serve and with appropriate means of accessing and delivering information. Laura Chodos New York State Board of Regents (testifying before) "Joint Congressional Hearing on the Changing Needs of Rural America" July 21, 1984 ********
• Expand access to cultural resources in rural public school systems:	Our outreach program would like to provide cultural awareness to rural residents. Perhaps if you could have a videotape or something of that nature, followed by a discussion of the event, that would be helpful. Most kids, and even the adult population, are content and happy with the movies on television.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Support local and regional public television and radio programming of cultural activities and materials appropriate for school curricula;

- Improve library resources available to students and teachers through regional resource sharing.

- Provide equitable services in critical life systems to all citizens of the state (e.g., provision of increased incentives for further development of non-institutionalized health maintenance programs, especially for the rural elderly).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

You almost have to deliver the expanding information base to their front door.

We have an information base in our regional archives and we hope in time to provide an information base for a publications program through an outreach program to community groups, senior citizens groups, Rotary Clubs, and the like. We also hope to organize an in-school program where the private sector can work with the public school system on teaching our children more about our regional heritage.

Whitty Sanford
Executive Director
Overcast Agricultural Center
Margaretville, New York
Delhi Hearing

When people think of 4-H, they think of cows and cooking. It's not a bad impression, and I'm not trying to dispel it. But we have to keep up with the times. We have tried to get a shorter time commitment from our volunteers. We're living in a world of shorter commitments, so we're starting to be more efficient. We don't teach academics, we teach life skills. The clubs open up a whole new peer group for kids. We offer kids the chance to go and do something they probably never did before.

Paul Fitzpatrick
Cooperative Extension
  Agent/Director
Madison County 4-H Program
(quoted in) Syracuse Post-Standard
"From Cows to Computers"
October 4, 1984

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Promotion of the expansion of rural networking, provision of equitable services in critical systems to all the citizens of the state, the education of local decisionmakers, community planners and residents, creation of a system for in-service training for school faculties and administration, and the ensuring of consideration of rural concerns in public programs

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

are just a few of the goals that we in the alcoholism field share with the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources.

Lucia Boyer
Executive Director
Jefferson County Committee
on Alcoholism
Syracuse Hearing

Adult day care in this area has been a vision in senior services for at least two years. The major benefits are for the family, particularly where both the husband and wife are working. In some cases, day care will be a less costly way to provide care.

Randy Ladue
Director of Home Care
Clinton County Senior Services
(quoted in) Plattsburgh Press Republican

August 4, 1984

The recent interest in adult day care has been spurred by state policies calling for improved cost controls on health care, especially since the majority of health care is provided to the elderly. In addition, the state is seeking more community-based programs and de-emphasizing institutions.

Jane Preston
New York State Health
Systems Agency
(quoted in) Plattsburgh Press Republican

"Day Care Centers for Elderly
Fill Area's Void"
August 4, 1984

Adult day care will reduce the cost of burn-out. Families taking care of older people sometimes get so tired. It is hard, under the best of circumstances, for two families to live together. It can cause tension in the family and unhappiness in the older person.

Kathie Laramie
Director
Clinton County Office for
the Aging
(quoted in) Plattsburgh Press Republican
August 4, 1984

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Educate local decisionmakers community planners, and residents in the:
  - Availability of existing services and alternatives;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The idea is simple - to provide care during daytime hours for elderly people who are not extremely sick, but need some assistance. In addition to providing a safe place with supervision, day care offers participants a chance to socialize with others. The non-profit center would be located in a one-family home with service for five or six people.

Day care is just one of a number of new programs being developed for the elderly, including respite care, house sharing, and foster care. These, and other services yet to be developed, are needed to keep the elderly out of hospitals and nursing homes, which are costly and can be demoralizing.

"Not For Kids Only"
Editorial Page
Schenectady Gazette
October 16, 1984

One of the goals for rural New York suggested by the Symposium is to devise a rural quality of life strategy which focuses on present human, natural, and community resources. An important element in any quality of life strategy is adequate provision of vital health and human services.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Agency
Canton Hearing

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There is a need for us to reevaluate the method used to establish the New York State Police Patrol post system and the staffing level of these posts. There are parts of New York State where there may be a need for more of what we have in other areas of the state, while certain places may require less of what we have. Our resource allocation and reallocation decisions have to ensure the New York State Police

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Potential for coordination and cooperation between service providers (e.g., creation of interagency committees that would provide an informal means of referral, sharing, and planning);

- Need for community participation in addressing deficiencies in service provision.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

provide the best possible service at the least possible cost for all rural residents. This is our basic and universally accepted mission.

Donald Chesworth
Superintendent
New York State Police
Albany Hearing

Although we use relatively large catchment areas, the Commission has encouraged the agencies in the program to reach out and utilize other existing advocacy services in order to assure the availability of advocacy services to persons with developmental disabilities in rural communities. This effort has been quite successful in that 54 percent of the persons served in the protection and advocacy program between July 1982 and June 1983 were from rural communities.

Irene L. Platt
Commissioner
Commission on Quality of
Care for the Mentally
Disabled
Albany Hearing

What we need to look at is a cooperative effort of government, private industry, educational groups, health organizations, and so forth, in order to draw us together so we can strive for the mutual betterment and long-range security of rural New York.

Whitty Sanford
Executive Director
Overcast Agricultural Center
Margaretville, New York
Delhi Hearing

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All schools should address the problem of domestic violence. Perhaps another part of the curriculum could emphasize community services that are available in each community. This would aid not only the children, but their families as well. We need a large scale educational program directed at the general

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Make telecommunications available in every rural area.

- Maximize existing passenger transportation services, both public and private (including improved coordination among existing transportation providers).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

public to raise awareness of the problem of domestic violence and to dispel the myths and stereotypes that surround it.

Bobbi Doupe
Counselor-Coordinator
Delaware Opportunities Safe
Against Violence
Delhi Hearing

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Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• How can the state achieve cost-effective use of resources in addressing the special needs of the people of rural New York?	We need to tap the expertise of individuals who are retiring in rural areas or settling there because they are fed up with the urban atmosphere. There are many professionals who have expertise and could help us preserve the rural quality of life, protect our traditions, and move toward the twenty-first century in an optimistic manner. Craig Gilborn Director Adirondack Museum Canton Hearing ********
• How can state and local governments encourage and promote greater community involvement in governance (public meetings, elective office, etc.)?	Before the first retirement community opened here in 1961, we were on the verge of bankruptcy. We could not attract industry because we could not afford to put in public water and public sewerage. Now, the elderly are the town's main source of revenue. Senior citizens are our industry. They provide sufficient funds to operate the municipality while freeing us from pollution, noise, and industrial traffic. Senior citizens volunteer their time without pay to make our government work. They are knowledgeable and talented. We have teachers, engineers, lawyers, doctors, auditors. We put them on the planning board, the zoning board, the sewer advisory committee. None are on welfare. There is no crime in their villages. They generate no social problems. They serve on the school board. Their villages have a 90 percent turn-out at the polls. They are the dominant force in the township's political and economic structure. Joseph S. Portash Township Administrator Manchester, New Jersey (quoted in) The New York Times "Retirement Towns Flourish in Jersey's Fields" March 5, 1984 ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can state and local governments promote greater cooperation and coordination between the many public and private service delivery systems that serve rural areas?

- Should the state seek closer communication between its administrators and state-funded service providers, for the purpose of identifying and eliminating wasteful and unnecessary regulatory barriers to efficient service delivery?

- How can the state and local governments foster the development and promotion of alternative community services and facilities appropriate to rural areas, and reduce this dependence upon large and expensive delivery systems?

- How can lawmakers provide incentives to preserve, strengthen, and promote the state's unique rural cultural resources (e.g., cottage crafts, local festivals, historical buildings, and arts, etc.)?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

In considering the public policy questions surrounding the issue of providing adequate human services in rural areas, one fact should be kept in mind. In rural New York, the providers of health and human services are often not units or agencies of government, but voluntary, private, non-profit organizations.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Agency
Canton Hearing

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An overall shrinking of services has been caused by a massive amount of regulation and duplication of efforts on the part of state agencies. Because of the size of our program, we have to be all things to all people.

Stephen Durham
Director
Delaware County Community
Mental Health Services
Delhi Hearing

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Life care is still a new concept in elderly housing. In Pennsylvania, the state legislature is only now grappling with legislation to regulate it.

Life care communities are designed to appeal to the middle-income elderly - those with financial security great enough to make them ineligible or subsidized housing but too meager to allow them to afford the financial drain of private nurses and homemakers.

Active elderly people move into unfurnished apartments of the size and layout their lifestyles demand and their resources allow. If their health deteriorates to the point where they can no longer care for themselves, they give up their apartments and become patients in the facility's on-site skilled nursing center.

"Life Care Complexes: A New
Housing Option for the Elderly"
Syracuse Post-Standard
May 26, 1984

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- To what extent do local service providers compete with one another, and what is the impact on the community?

- Should the state more aggressively address the disparity between rural and urban residents' accessiblity to quality physical and mental health treatment and maintenance, education, and other critical life systems?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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We are deeply concerned about the major gaps present in the area of mental health services. Some of these gaps are due to problems inherent in the mental health system in New York State. Some are due to the relative isolation of many rural counties. New York has one of the most complex and cumbersome systems for the delivery of mental health hygiene services. We have four separate state agencies with legions of bureaucrats, reams of codes, rules and regulations, countless funding streams, programs and planning guidelines that are sometimes duplicative and other times in direct contradition with one another. We are also burdened with a net deficit financing scheme that has failed to provide assistance dollars to rural localities to develop comprehensive core services needed to adequately care for our mentally ill.

Stephen Dunham
Director
Delaware County Community
Mental Health Services
Delhi Hearing

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Why should rural residents be required to provide human services through the use of volunteers? For example, we used to have ambulance service through the undertakers. We also had nursing homes, and in both of these cases, the people were put out of business by legislative requirements and regulations, even though they were suitable and helpful. This is something which the Legislature has to examine differently in the rural areas and not apply urban standards.

Mary O'Donnell
Representing Robert D. Smith
Presbyterian Minister
Schoharie, New York
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Is it a responsibility of the state to assure access for every household to information services?

- How can greater trust and rapport be established between the state and local governments in rural areas?

- How can rural areas develop more effective cosmopolitan-type mechanisms to expand the horizons of isolated rural residents, while also preserving a very invaluable sense of local heritage and texture?

- To what extent can problems be solved by localities without direct state or federal intervention? Should government provide incentives for facilitating problem solving at the local level?

- How can the state promote increased effectiveness of its existing "quality of life" regulations?

Health Care

Regarding the Commission on Rural Resources' general approach to all these issues, I'd like to caution you against painting rural New York with too broad a brush. Indeed, one of New York State's greatest assets is the unique diversity of its people, places, landscape, and resources. We must build on the strength we have found in that diverse terrain and not attempt to level it with policies based on a stereotypical image of rural New York.

Mark Scarlett
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Housing
Council, Inc.
Canton Hearing

In essence, equity demands that health services be distributed fairly and that all segments of our population have access to a certain minimal level of health care, no matter how poor or scattered the population might be.

James G. Schuman
"The Question of Equity"
Report of the 1983 Forum on
Hospital and Health Affairs

Symposium Workshop Participants

Moderator:

Assemblyman Michael R. McNulty

Facilitator:

Leonard Cutler
Grants Officer
New York State Senate Research Service

Resource Person:

Ira Moscovice
Associate Professor, Center for Health Services Research
University of Minnesota

Recorder:

Mabel Osterhaudt
District Secretary to Senator Cook
Greene County

Participants

Evald Bors-Koefoed
Administrator
Ellenville Community Hospital

Jean S. Curry
Secretary
Hudson Valley Emergency Medical Services Council

Jan S. Dorman
Executive Director
New York State Public Health Association

Richard Endres
Medical Director
Sodus Health Center

Helen A. Jordan
Medical Technologist
Tompkins Community Hospital

Doreen O. Laing
Director of Patient Services
Chenango County Public Health Nursing Service

Neil Lane
Director, Community Alternate Systems Agency (CASA)
Binghamton, New York

Matthew Luger
Director
Delaware County Home and Infirmary

Floyd E. Metzger
Assistant Vice President
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania

John Mitchell
Senior Health Care Fiscal Analyst
New York State Department of Health

Luella A. Oakes
Director of Patient Services
Madison County Public Health Nursing Services

Gary Preiser
Pediatrician
Medical Office Facility
Walton, New York

Lindsay Robinson
Vice President
Professional and Regulatory Affairs
Hospital Association of New York State

Introduction

The quality and proximity of health care is critical to rural New York. An adequate health care system is one component of the community-social fabric that enables people to live and realize their potential in rural areas. Moreover, health care providers interact powerfully with other important components of rural development, particularly business and employment, transportation, and education. Thus, rural communities require functioning health care systems for their physiological, emotional, and economic well-being.

Despite increases in New York State's overall physician supply during the last decade, major changes have not been achieved in the rural primary care specialties - general and family practice; general internal medicine, surgery, and anesthesiology; and general pediatrics. Another alarming trend evidenced during the last 10 years is the dwindling number of small, predominately rural, non-teaching hospitals of less than 50 beds. Although serious equity issues have arisen concerning rural hospital closures, state health planners and policymakers probably will continue to seek a reduction in the total number of hospitals in New York State.

The importance of the rural hospital cannot be over-emphasized; it is a vital component of the rural health care system and an important institution in the rural community from a functional, symbolic, and economic perspective. Rural hospitals work closely with the church and school as elements through which rural communities define themselves. This strong capacity for the planning and integration of services at the local level encourages a community-wide commitment to volunteerism in many rural areas.

Yet, serious problems underlie the viability of rural health care. The current economic vulnerability of rural hospitals is attributable, in part, to technological obsolescence in many of these institutions with respect to their facilities and equipment. Outside attempts to control and restrain the health care industry in different environments and settings have weakened the rural hospital's capacity to make creative and innovative use of new technology as a viable, alternative form of rural health care delivery. In addition, health industry factors such as the increased emphasis on specialty training, rapid growth of medical technology, licensing regulations and practice constraints for health care providers have limited the number and type of health personnel that rural hospitals can recruit and retain.

Another weakness contributing to the overall rural health care dilemma is that rural areas have a relatively large proportion of their population in the elderly category. Indeed, the sparsely settled rural population base generally has not been well served by the wide and growing spectrum of health and human service programs that have recently been developed for the elderly. In particular, there has been a notable absence of innovative, realistic, and cost-effective alternatives to institutionalization (such as home health care) for the rural elderly. This problem is further exacerbated by the current emphasis on health care cost containment which militates against improved access to health care service, for those rural areas with significant needs.

A chief goal for policymakers is to develop and implement a flexible planning and regulatory framework that satisfies the health care needs of individual rural communities. Such flexibility would mitigate an added burden recently placed on many rural health care facilities and providers: a system of diagnostic-related reimbursement (DRG's). The DRG system fails to address the needs of rural residents who might be afflicted by multiple-medical, chronically disabling conditions. Another goal is to improve the supply of health professionals. For example, an increased role for nurse practitioners would certainly help alleviate low physician-to-population ratios in rural communities and more adequately address the needs of the elderly. Other types of new health care personnel are also required.

A key public policy issue that will require further discussion is how local community involvement and support in the planning, design, implementation, and maintenance of rural health care can be enhanced. A related issue concerns the difficulty of coming to grips with the true underlying problems of rural health care if strategies do not distinguish between rural and urban areas, not to mention being responsive to the great diversity that exists among rural areas themselves. In addition, policymakers need to place more emphasis on less costly, preventive strategies to traditional forms of rural health care. The provision of preventive health programs by qualified health professionals for such topics as toxic substances, newborn and infant care, and the merits of nutrition, exercise, and wholistic approaches to health care have not been adequately addressed for isolated rural residents.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends and Assumptions

- During the 1970's, rural counties in New York State experienced population increases - a turnaround of the seemingly inevitable dissipation of the rural populace.

  - The transition underway in rural areas will have important implications for the future status of rural health care systems;

  - The resurgence of rural life, sustained by emerging decentralization in our society, should help to make this decade a productive one for improving health care delivery in rural areas;

  - The associated demographic shifts will heighten the need for rationally planned rural health systems and will increase the potential for significant involvement of the rural populace for designing the health care and other social systems it will use.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

One of the trends that we have seen has been the people who perhaps moved to Florida and then moved back to rural New York at a later time and are particularly in need of services.

Thomas Briggs
Director
Delaware County Office
for the Aging

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The associated demographic shifts will heighten the need for long term care services for the elderly. Although the existing climate of cost containment and restrictions on the construction of new nursing home beds will undoubtedly impact rural long term care delivery systems, workable policies can be implemented which combine institutional arrangements with outreach programs for the community-based elderly.

Frank Mandy
Policy Analyst
New York Association
of Homes and Services
for the Aging
Albany Hearing

The cost of health care has reached a level where the citizens who are not members of some insurance group are unable to afford even basic health care. The cost of health services insurance is increasing far faster than the cost-of-living average.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Rural populations have traditionally lagged behind more densely populated regions in the acquisition of basic social services, including health care.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

As our nation has addressed the new moral and ethical issues related to such factors as technical advances in medicine, increased understanding of health issues, cost of health services, and the need to allocate scarce resources, we have seen dramatic changes in health policies. Still, many traditional approaches to rural health care become increasingly ineffective as time goes on.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

I view health care as a continuum covering both time and levels of care. These include, for example, preventive techniques, wellness, prenatal care, pediatric, adolescent, and adult care; outpatient services; catastrophic illness, trauma, and rehabilitation; mental health; and skilled nursing, home health, long term, and hospice care.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

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- The increased overall supply of physicians has not resulted in major changes in the population of physicians in the primary care specialties - general and family practice; general internal medicine, surgery, and anesthesiology; and general pediatrics.

The major area of concern in our county is the critical shortage of dentists who will provide services for Medicaid clients. The reason for this reluctance to provide dental service is easily traced to the fact that there has not been a state rate increase to dentists since the late 1960s. Another issue of general concern is the tremendous amount of paperwork created by our present mandated system. This is a deterrent to providers who participate in providing services to the medically indigent.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

Rural New York is identified as being underpopulated relating to available primary care physicians to service rural residents. The rural hospital might be considered a supply commodity, as well as the physicians. The hospital provides the resource for physicians to treat their patients for problems requiring greater intensity than can be rendered through their offices. It provides the menu from which the doctor can select portions for the patient care. The hospital provides the greatest concentration of special expertise, technology, and coordination for treating a patient.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

In our county, there is only one physician who will treat Medicaid patients. The reason for this situation is largely due to the fact that Medicaid rates are lower than all other physician rates. Inevitably, welfare recipients, if they can get there, are forced to go to another county to receive emergency medical treatment at a considerable cost of Medicaid dollars.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Care Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

There is a critical lack of pediatric care in our area. Other than the availability of a well-child clinic a couple of days a month, there isn't anywhere one can take a sick child. We have nothing for children except an emergency room, and that is a poor utilization of an emergency room, unless it is a genuine emergency.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Care Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

Until two years ago, the average age of members of the Academy of Family Practice was 62 years old. These numbers have decreased some, but most of the family physicians who are going into practice today are not settling in rural communities. At the same time, the mid-level practitioners are also not going into medically deprived areas. They too, are settling "where the dollar is," and that is in the urban and

- For example, in 1982 only 38% of physicians in New York State were in primary care specialties providing basic medical services.

suburban areas.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

Rural areas suffer from a shortage of primary care. There are many reasons underlying this problem. Perhaps the most important reason is the reluctance of many newly trained physicians to relocate in certain rural areas. Although there is growing evidence that physicians are willing to move into rural areas, many areas remain medically underserved. As a result, even those with adequate insurance coverage or other means to pay for patient care find themselves unable to secure services without traveling, sometimes great distances, to receive care. Those without adequate coverage or the means to pay for care are often left without access to any care at all.

Ronald Rouse
Director
Bureau of Program and
  Policy Development
Albany Hearing

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The so-called physician surplus is not going to occur because most of the increased numbers of physicians being trained are going into subspecialties rather than family practice. Unless our policies are altered to attract more individuals into rural communities, disaster awaits us.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

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There are significant gaps in primary care services in New York State's rural counties. Such gaps include the closing of small, community hospitals and the lack of qualified health care personnel. In addition, private practice physicians in rural areas will not serve the poor or near poor. Many county health

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- During the past five years, the dwindling supply of general practitioners has begun to be replaced by recently trained family practitioners and other specialists.
  - An encouraging proportion (more than 1/3) of recent family practitioner residency graduates are locating in non-metropolitan areas;
  - In the areas of primary care, the residency trained family practitioner will solidify his/her role as the core of the rural physician supply;
  - There will be a continued reemphasis of the generalist role in rural health despite educational and regulatory forces (e.g., specialization and credentialing) which militate against the production of the confident generalist;
  - Recent research indicates that board certified specialists are beginning to migrate to non-metropolitan areas;
  - The internist and pediatrician allied with the rural hospital also provide potent family care and must be equally encouraged in rural areas. The team of obstetrician and pediatrician

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

departments either do not have clinics or have insufficient services to meet primary care needs. In 23 upstate counties, there is no subsidized pre-natal care. This means that poor and near poor women either forgo pre-natal care, or seek pre-natal care as late as the third trimester.

Shirley Gordon
Executive Director
Family Planning Advocates of
New York State, Inc.

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Medicine is an art, not a science. I think we lose that definition too often in addressing the problems of health care. Physicians should treat patients, not disease.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

There is a female family practitioner who is really a beautiful part of our rural community. But I have seen her riding around in her station wagon to the point where I think she will burn out very quickly. There should be five of her kind where there is one.

Reverend Paul Engel
Pastor
St. Mary's Church
Middleburgh, New York
Delhi Hearing

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The function of Community Alternative Systems is to reach the patient and his or her family and offer realistic alternatives to health care. One of these is home care. Very often, if rural people are offered options appropriate to their needs, they are more than willing to accept them.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

is essential for the maintenance of a safe newborn service, while the surgeon is vital to the survival and safety of the rural hospital.

- Yet, despite the aforementioned gains, those areas with the fewest resources and the greatest need for physicians (counties with population under 50,000), still have great difficulty in attracting family practitioners or specialists to their regions.

- Rural areas will start to consider the use of alternatives to the traditional physician entreprenurial model including hospital-based primary care, the use of non-physician health care providers (e.g., nurse practitioners) in remote areas, and the use of state and local health departments for the direct provision of primary care.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The distances that people have to travel for health care are growing, and the alternative to this is the use of fire department emergency squads and ambulances with occasional mid-level practitioners.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

The existing home health care service in our community is a public health care nursing service. As such, it has serious limitations, such as the lack of availability of nursing care on the weekends. Their employees work 9 to 5, Monday through Friday. Services at other times are extraordinarily difficult to obtain for our patients. We, as a two hospital institutional system, have begun to consider the provision of some of the non-traditional services, such as organized home care services for our area.

Robert Kayser
Administrator
Taylor Brown Hospital
Seneca Falls, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

The imposition of Diagnostic Related Groups (DRG's) have deemphasized hospital occupancy standards as well as provided a negative incentive to vertical integration of health services in rural areas. Ultimately, hospitals will become diagnostic and ambulatory treatment centers as well as maintain their traditional role as providers of primary care. Such a system raises serious questions regarding cost containment policies and their impact on quality health care in rural New York.

Richard McDevitt
Executive Secretary
New York State Council
of Catholic Hospitals

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Experience has shown that health service practitioners will provide the type of services

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Targeted approaches for rural areas or populations with special problems will slowly replace the comprehensive efforts of the 1970's aimed at improving access to primary care services in rural areas.

- Tradional fee-for-service systems have started to be replaced by a relatively new concept which allows for the provision of comprehensive care to large groups of people through specific health care facilities at predetermined negotiable rates. Examples of these systems include Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) and Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs). The feasibility of HMOs and PPOs in rural areas is unclear at this point.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

which we, as a society, can adequately finance. There seems to have been a tendency to provide the resources for traditional services rather than lower-cost non-traditional alternatives in many cases.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

The main thrust of the Health Systems Agencies is to try to achieve a balance between the development of institutional services, both hospital and nursing homes, which are very expensive services, and also balancing it with the community-based services so that those in most need are the ones that end up using the more expensive services.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

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At this time, the rural population in our area is not large enough to support a health maintenance organization. We had thought of the concept of a rural HMO as something we would like to have explored in greater depth. We have spoken to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation about potential consulting assistance. However, because we are already in existence, they are not as interested in dealing with us as if we had been brand new. They feel they do not want to "just replace things".

Florence Carpenter
Interim Director
Rushville Health Center
Canandaigua Hearing

The feasibility of HMO's and PPO's in rural areas is indeed unclear at this point. In addition to the poor transportation facilities, a significant percentage of rural roads are closed seasonally due to snow, steep grades, etc. The short growing season and the intense

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- In the past decade, the number of small and predominately rural hospitals of less than 50 beds has considerably diminished, whereas sizable growth has been achieved in the number of hospitals with greater than 200 beds.
  - Approximately one-fifth of rural community hospitals in New York have closed during the past decade. This trend is expected to continue to pervade the rural hospital industry during the 1980's;
  - State health planners and policymakers will probably continue its emphasis of the past 15 years to reduce the total number of hospitals;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

work schedule of those farming communities leads to what we call the "critical wait". Many patients seek medical attention only when they have a critical problem.

James Feuss
Director of Public Health
Cortland County Health
Department

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As you move across New York State, there is a considerable variation in the number of days of hospitalization used by the population in rural areas. Our bed capacity planning rests on the relationship between bed capacity and the amount of hospitalization populations use. At one end of the scale, the maximum number of days of hospitalization is limited by the number of hospital beds available. What is less obvious, however, is that the number of hospital beds available also has a strong influence on the minimum amount of care which will be provided.

Jonathan Rudolph
Assistant Director
Finger Lakes Health Systems
Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

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In view of the recent and emerging changes in the health care reimbursement systems, the fiscal viability of the remaining hospitals in rural areas will likely depend on the elimination of the unnecessary hospital beds.

Jonathan Rudolph
Assistant Director
Finger Lakes Health Systems
Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The decrease in the number of hospitals will take place mainly among small non-teaching hospitals, most of which are currently located in rural areas;

- Rural hospitals have been natural targets for closure despite questions concerning the cost-effectiveness from both a national and local perspective;

- Rural hospitals often make a significant contribution to the local economy, and the actual impact of a closure would depend upon the adaptation of the community following closure.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

If we close rural hospitals, we are going to take a very vital service away from the local community. That element is human involvement.

Joseph Shinal
Member
Board of Managers
Seneca Falls Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

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The large metropolitan hospitals, which can afford the expertise to stay one jump ahead of the state mandated changes, will ensure the continuation of those facilities while the erosion of the cash resources of the small non-teaching rural hospital will continue unabated.

Doris Warrick
Administrator
Mary McClellan Hospital
Troy Hearing

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How do you entice a new young physician to locate in a rural area? The first thing you do is pay him. The second thing you do is give him good hospital contact support. Yet, the State Health Department is closing small rural hospitals right and left. They are also constraining the use of existing rural facilities. We can no longer take care of preemie babies in our area hospital. We had a better record there than any of the hospitals in the metropolitan area, but we were closed strictly on the basis of numbers.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

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When you close a rural hospital, you lose the jobs of a traditionally stable employer. Most often, there are a reasonable number of health

- Many rural hospitals currently must cope with declining occupancy rates, a decreased patient day base, and decreased patient revenues.
  - The above symptoms of a fiscally-troubled institution have resulted in increased average costs per patient day in rural hospitals, although such costs are less than those evidenced in larger urban hospitals;
  - Dramatic increases in the cost of hospital care have led to sizable increases in regulatory efforts.

professionals who will relocate in other areas because they cannot be integrated into the current workforce. As a result, the community's tax base erodes, which makes it less attractive for in-migration, particularly for new industry. Without health care providers, communities are indeed at risk to provide on-site care for their employees at considerable costs. The patient and family incur a new expense to travel to a distant hospital, if it is fairly far away.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

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There is a marked variation in both utilization and hospital bed supply across New York State. There are low bed supply/low utilization situations and high bed supply/high utilization situations in both urban and rural areas. In fact, excess beds and unnecessary utilization is not an urban/rural issue. There are both urban and rural areas in which the bed supply exceeds the needs of the residents even after special adjustments have been made. Some of the rural areas we serve do not have excess beds and high utilization even after special consideration is given to their rural nature and we have developed hospital-specific bed plans to reduce this excess.

Jonathan Rudolph
Assistant Director
Finger Lakes Health Systems
  Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

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The growing number of people retiring in rural areas and the provision of health and social services for the elderly will remain a challenge for rural communities in the coming decades. I certainly agree with this statement of the Commission on Rural Resources and believe it is

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- The aging of the population and the growing number of people retiring in rural areas guarantees that providing health and social services for the elderly will remain a major challenge for rural communities.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

accurate. But it simply indicates that we need alternatives to the present system. I believe this system is not working well for anyone, particularly the elderly.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

Over the past several years, our county's population has experienced a high growth rate, while correspondingly, there has been a large increase in the number of elderly in need of health care services. Although primary acute care appears to be sufficient for the needs of the general public, the needs of the elderly, particularly in predominately rural counties with regard to long term care, are still paramount and appear to be a matter of continuing concern for the future.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

Older Americans enter hospitals twice as often and stay twice as long as the general population. Yet, the rural health care system generally delivers a fragmented system of services to the elderly, often creating confusion, frustration, and discouragement for patients and their families.

Sr. Mary Walter Boyle
New York State Council
of Catholic Hospitals

An ever-increasing demand for services associated with dwindling health and social resources has precipitated a crisis which has not only negatively impacted on the present generation of elderly and their families, but can be anticipated to have catastrophic consequences for future generations.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- States will play an increasingly important role in the improved integration of local rural health systems as the federal government reduces its previous active role.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The problem of the aged population is a concern to every segment of society.

Sr. Mary Walter Boyle
New York State Council
of Catholic Hospitals

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In an era of diminishing governmental resources, we must learn to direct the resources that we do have to those areas where they can do the most good.

Ronald Rouse
Director
Bureau of Program and
Policy Development
New York State Health
Department
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- The quality of rural life: particularly the integrity, quiet strength, and compassion inherently found in small-town life and social services delivery.

- Diversification of practice and experience; wide range of skills required by rural health providers indicates the need for a broad training background.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

One of the unique strengths found in the delivery of health and social services in rural areas is the compassion, understanding and dependability of a dedicated corps of volunteers. Our hospital has one of the most active volunteer programs in our area.

Doris Warrick
Administrator
Mary McClellan Hospital
Troy Hearing

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In the area of ambulatory care, we not only have been successful in recruiting physicians, but a good portion have remained in our area. I view that as a success. There is a lot of hard work ahead and much remains to be done. But I believe there is cause for hope in rural New York as well.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

One of the most vital resources in our health care system is its proximity to a baccaluareate degree nurse training program which provides us with a steady pool of nurses to draw upon.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

It makes one very proud to be a member of a small rural hospital which can, with the greatest efficiency, self-discipline, compassion and concern, respond to crisis situations.

Doris Warrick
Administrator
Mary McClellan Hospital
Troy Hearing

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Although there is no formal network of coordination between hospitals, nursing homes,

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Capacity for planning and integration of services at the local level; there is strong local commitment to community hospitals and other health care institutions.

- The rural hospital is a vital component of the rural health care system and an important institution in rural communities from a functional, symbolic, and economic perspective.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

nursing services, volunteer ambulance corps and physicians in our area, there is always an important level of communication in rural communities, which is not usually found in metropolitan regions.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

The current strengths of the family planning network - flexibility, accessibility, willingness to take on new roles, use of nurse practitioners, strong community base and commitment to preventive care - are now available in all rural counties but Putnam at 66 locations throughout rural New York State.

Shirley Gordon
Executive Director
Family Planning Advocates
of New York State, Inc.

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During the last ten years we have been under such constant pressure, yet we still provided all of the health services that were needed in our area. We were also financially sound. I don't see how a state can close a rural hospital when it is providing employment and is a financially stable facility.

Frank Saracino
Supervisor
Town of Seneca Falls
Canandaigua Hearing

We ask you to consider the resource value of small rural hospitals, many of which are the leading employers in the communities they serve. In many ways, they are the focal point of health and social services delivery to the rural population. Instead of forcing them out of business, we should try to preserve the integrity of the small rural hospital.

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths (cont'd.)

- The hospital works with the church and school as elements through which rural communities define themselves;
- A strong community-wide commitment to volunteerism is prevalent in many rural areas - active, local community groups are linked into networks which aid rural hospitals.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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On the positive side, rural areas have been rather progressive and creative in maximizing the use of the resources available to them. Hospitals in rural areas tend to be a focal point for the community and enjoy much broader support over a wider geographical region while tending to bring communities together.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

Community service workers are a tremendous resource in the provision of transportation services for those in need of medical attention and treatment. In our community, we operate four cars and transport patients back and forth for radiology and dialysis, since we do not have such services available within our county. We spent approximately a quarter of a million dollars last year on this program, while avoiding hospitalization totaling nearly one million dollars. The bottom line was that rural citizens received quality health care in the most cost-effective manner available to them.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

We would like to emphasize the resource value of the health care institutions in rural communities. Many of us are deeply committed to working within our community and providing alternative methods of health care, networking with other agencies, and identifying additional support mechanisms. Doctors work very closely with public health nurses. These nurses do a fantastic job. They sit on discharge planning committees, work closely with the hospital from the time a patient is admitted to a facility, and plan post-hospital treatment and care. There is indeed a concerted degree of cooperation and a fine working relationship between the rural primary health care team.

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Cost-effectiveness in delivery of certain health care services.
  - Care is available at more reasonable rates;
  - Unnecessary laboratory testing is avoided;
  - More time is spent attending to the individual patient's needs.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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We have supported the "Nursing Home Without Walls" program very highly. It coordinates the community-based services for people that need them most, since one has to qualify for nursing home care to be part of a home care program. The costs need to be 75 percent or less than the cost of comparable institutional care, so it has been a cost-effective program so far.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Lack of flexibility in the health care system, which is working to the disadvantage of users and local providers.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

As more and more people are cared for by their families, there is a tremendous strain placed on the elderly population. Respite care is a service which takes care of the chronically-ill client so that the family can get away either for medical care of their own or a vacation, either for a day or two or a couple of weeks. Although respite care can be provided through the long-term health care program, nursing homes have not attempted to provide respite care because the bed would not be filled continuously. Open beds create problems for reimbursement. They feel if the person is functioning well at home, it is rather difficult to be moved out for two weeks.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

We who are responsible for operating hospitals in rural counties are faced with a multiplicity of problems that have to do with the system and the regulatory environment, access to capital, access to manpower, the ability to recruit a responsible corps of health care professionals, and the ability to keep our physical facilities in compliance with New York State health care codes. More importantly, we are hampered in our desire to react to the needs and expectations of the people who look to the hospitals and other providers for quality health care services.

Frank Isbell
President and Chief
Executive Officer
Fox Memorial Hospital
Oneonta, New York
Delhi Hearing

Large hospital facilities may be providing services that the patient does not need. Appropriately located patients in a hospital which can provide a primary level of care can usually be done more efficiently in a rural setting. If the patient from a rural community would have to travel to a metropolitan hospital for pneumonia, I'm not sure that the patient would really be getting what he was paying for.

- The viability of the rural hospital.
    - The economic stability of the rural hospital will remain tenuous. The scope and quality of services they provide depend largely upon the local supply of health personnel, access to capital, and the ability to incorporate the appropriate technology.

He is getting a facility much greater than what he needs to provide the kind of care that could be rendered in a small rural hospital.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

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Rural hospitals should be given special allowances for code compliance. We have found that we must recruit additional personnel to satisfy certain regulations. Although we strive to provide the highest quality of care, it has become increasingly difficult for our already taxed institutions and appropriate personnel department to comply with codes that have been tailored to meet the needs and concerns of much larger institutions.

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

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The rural hospitals in our area are under great financial strains and have a great difficulty in raising adequate funds and receiving reimbursement. In some cases, there is a need for a realignment of some of the services provided by hospitals in order to create a more efficient system. The difficulty in planning for acute care services in a rural area centers around the need to balance accessibility with efficiency. It might be more efficient to have one big hospital in one place in terms of the delivery of services. However, in that case, accessibility is being sacrificed. There is a need to examine both efficiency and accessibility as well as the balance between the two.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

The economic stability, state-of-the-art technology and health professional shortages are all

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Factors such as the increased emphasis on specialty training, rapid growth of medical technology, licensing regulations, and practice constraints for non-physician health care providers have limited the number and type of health personnel that rural hospitals can recruit and retain.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

contributors to the struggling and shrinking rural hospital system across rural New York State.

Ronald Rouse
Director
Bureau of Program and
Policy Development
New York State Health
Department
Albany Hearing

A recent survey by the Office of Health Systems Management at our facility resulted in cited deficiencies because we did not maintain 24-hour registered nurse coverage in the new-born nursery. Our five-bed maternity nursing unit which handles these services can now only handle delivery of new-borns and postpartum care. A separate staff including a registered nurse to head up the nursery unit has to be recruited according to OHSM. This will result in a $100,000 increase in health care costs. The control the hospital has over this particular issue is nil. I believe the code should reflect regulatory relief for small units. There are many other similar issues, with the end result being the fiscal inability to provide accessible health care to rural areas.

Doris Warrick
Administrator
Mary McClellan Hospital
Troy Hearing

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Although we contract for physical therapy, when it comes to some of the more specific services like medical social work and occupational therapy, those types of people simply don't exist in rural areas.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Services Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Although the modern day hospital embodies the nature of our current technological society, the small rural hospital has been truly disturbed by technological expansion. Patients and providers often expect new technology to be available in their local hospital. However, the burden of utilizing expensive technologies for sparse populations can be overwhelming.

- The maldistribution of health resources is not easily overcome. For example, rural areas depend heavily on the training of sufficient generalists to assure an adequate supply of health manpower, yet training institutions place a primary emphasis on the specialist.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

It is terribly difficult, if not impossible, for rural hospitals to compete with large urban hospitals in state-of-the-art technology as well as the availability of a range of highly skilled health care practitioners. Yet, the need for access to emergency care and hospitalization for rural residents remains a terribly important issue which raises serious questions about an equitable and just system of quality health care in New York State.

Beth Eckler
Registered Nurse
New York State Nurses
Association
Albany Hearing

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Although we now have two doctors where there formerly was only one, it still seems that two semi-retired doctors are really not adequate for an array of contemporary medical policies and practices. There is indeed a dearth of medical professionals in our rural areas.

Reverend Paul Engel
Pastor
St. Mary's Church
Middleburgh, New York
Delhi Hearing

Although we have six general practitioners or internists and two general surgeons, of those general practitioners, only two are still taking new patients. Only one will see new Medicaid cases, so that we have a large number of people who cannot find primary care services without going outside the county. Yet, there is no public transportation. The only transportation that is available for health care services is geared to senior citizens. While they are a very important segment of the population, there are large groups of rural residents who fall through the cracks.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Care Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Health professionals in rural areas have encountered difficulties in obtaining access to continuing education in efforts to upgrade their skills.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Health care is not a clean economics lesson. The patient consumer does not always choose the product he will buy. While he or she may select their physician, they most probably will not select the hospital where that physician treats them, since that will depend on where the physician has admitting privileges. More than likely, the patient will not choose the methods of treatment for care, because the physician's decision will guide the course of treatment. Overall, while the patients have the ability to choose their care, their circumstances may not always afford them well-planned choices.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

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The delivery of rural health services will be enhanced by increased training requirements of health professionals. However, many current practitioners have little incentive to upgrade their skills or the economic resources and accessibility to gain the education which could make them more effective. We have LPNs who cannot go on for a RN degree and there is a serious lack of financial assistance in many cases to help them do so.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
  Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

I have heard from various health care agencies that sometimes it is very difficult to find a physical therapist. The local health departments can't afford the salaries. On occasion, even the hospitals can't afford them because physical therapists in other parts of the country are paid much more than physical therapists in this region.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
  of Western New York
Olean Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Shortage of nursing personnel.
  - In particular, rural hospitals have experienced problems attracting adequate registered nursing personnel, especially those both capable and willing to assume the diverse and complex tasks required in the rural hospital environment. The shortage of health personnel in rural areas increases the range of skills required of nurses.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Hospitals pay much more than nursing homes do, so it's difficult for nursing homes to obtain the nurses that they need.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

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When you are short on numbers, even if you recruit a few more nurses, you are going to ask them to do so much that they often become discouraged and leave again very quickly.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Care Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

Nursing care for the elderly should not be relegated to the hospitals or should not take place in nursing homes. Instead, the rural elderly require the care of public health nurses. Our community recently had an experience with several very qualified public health nurses who had to relinquish their positions because of the intensity of their caseloads. They were unable to contiue to function because of the demands placed on them. It seems, like so many other things, that this is a budgetary problem; the state and local counties are not putting enough money toward this type of health care delivery.

Reverend Paul Engel
Pastor
St. Mary's Church
Middleburgh, New York
Delhi Hearing

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From attempts to control, guide, stimulate, and restrain the health care industry in different environments and settings, there have been survivors and casualties among rural providers and hospitals. Some of today's survivors may

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Many rural hospitals are, at present, technologically obsolescent with respect to their facilities and equipment. These hospitals face numerous problems in their attempts to incorporate new technology:
  - Including insufficient funds for the sizable capital expenditures required for new technology;
  - lack of adequately trained personnel and inability to provide inhouse education and training resources;
  - and lack of sufficient utilization to justify the large fixed costs of state-of-the-art equipment and associated personnel.
- The current emphasis on health care cost containment will militate against improved access to health care services, in those rural areas with significant needs.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

well not be in strong positions of technology, facility conditions or financial health. Some of these institutions may need creative assistance and leadership as well as incentives to examine alternative forms of health care delivery or perhaps a service mix.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

One of the major concerns of rural hospitals is the need to require and staff state-of-the-art medical technology routinely used for diagnosis and treatment. The cost of this type of major medical technology, such as CT scanners and linear accelerators, are often prohibitive to the individual rural hospital, which frequently neither has access to financing nor the volume of cases needed for acquisition.

Ronald Rouse
Director
Bureau of Program and
Policy Development
New York State Health
Department
Albany Hearing

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Rural communities must be assured that there will be an appropriate and necessary level of primary care for their citizens. Health care costs can only continue to rise for the consumer and the state if we expect large institutions to absorb the additional caseload. Furthermore, they would not be in a position for an extended length of time, if ever, to address the needs of health education and health promotion in the rural sector. Who will provide? Who will fill the void?

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

New York State has been trying to control the number of hospital beds. They have established a methodology on how these are determined by using a formula that attempts to restrict the addition of beds without taking into account the needs of particular areas. Prior to the opening of additional beds, our hospital was running in excess of 100 percent occupancy. We had to turn people away. We had to cancel admissions. We had to cancel elective surgeries. It was having a disruptive influence on the medical community to react to the needs of the rural population who presented themselves for care. These are the kinds of things in practice that are inflexible, unrealistic and are prime examples of decisions made by people who are not experts in the field.

Frank Isbell
President and Chief
Executive Officer
Fox Memorial Hospital
Oneonta, New York
Delhi Hearing

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There are serious placement problems for the rural elderly. In other words, people remain in hospitals for very long periods of time awaiting placement in a nursing home. People often say to us, "Why not build more nursing home beds?" More beds is not the answer to the problem, because the people who are backed up waiting in the hospital are different from the people who are quickly placed in nursing homes. They tend to be people with psychological problems, and nursing home administrators say, "No, we can't take those patients." Sometimes they need one-to-one staffing, and the reimbursement rate is not high enough to afford such an arrangement.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
of Western New York
Olean Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

My family doctor is in Saranac Lake, an hour and a half distance. Everyone who lives in our region, of course, always has a concern. There is a volunteer ambulance corps, but it can take an hour to an hour and a half just to get to a hospital.

Craig Gilborn
Director
Adirondack Museum
Canton Hearing

The problems in rural health care today are that the present policies on the part of federal and state planners are placing rural citizens in a secondary health care category. Most of the medical dollar is going to the urban areas, which means that rural New York citizens are suffering from either a lack of prompt quality health care or have a very minimal amount of care. It is presently being delivered by a group of tired old physicians who have few replacements coming in.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

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By now almost everyone is aware of the "graying of America" - the fact that a steadily increasing percentage of the United States population is living past the age of 65, the long-accepted benchmark for entry into old age.

What is dramatically new and worrisome about this fact is what one expert calls "phase two of the gerontological explosion" - the aging of the aged. As society learns to better stave off heart disease, strokes, cancer, and other killers, more and more Americans, and an increasing percentage of the total population, are living not just past 65, but on into their 80's, 90's, and beyond.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Rural areas have a larger proportion of the elderly population than do urban areas.
    - The rural aged have lower incomes, less mobility due to poor transportation facilities, and poorer health status than do their urban contemporaries;
    - Proper care for the elderly and other chronically ill is poor at best;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

It is these "oldest old" - often mentally or physically impaired, alone, depressed - who pose the major problems for the coming decades. It is they who will strain their families with demands for personal care and financial support.

Alan L. Otten
"Old Age Getting Older and
Older These Days"
Plattsburgh Press Republican
July 31, 1984

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Calling an ambulance and going to an emergency room are sometimes not reimbursable by health insurance or Medicare. As a result, many of the rural elderly are forced to pay for such services out of their pockets. This is a group of people that are living on fixed income. They are retired. They are collecting Social Security.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

A very small percentage of the people we see are Medicare/Medicaid. I believe a good share of the elderly are eligible for Medicaid, but they are too proud to sign up for it. They associate it with welfare and the bread lines of the '30's.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

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The inaccessibility of health care in rural communities is a tremendous concern. In order for some of the rural elderly to receive health care, it is often necessary for them to call an ambulance to go to the hospital. So that is at least a $200 fee plus whatever the fee in the emergency room is. One woman in our area - and

- The relatively sparse population density in rural areas generally cannot support the wide and growing spectrum of health and social service programs that have recently developed for the elderly.

we can document it - spent close to $300 just to get an enema.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

One of the most horrendous problems that plagues health care today is what we label "polypharmacy." Too many medications are given to elderly people who have kidneys and liver that are not functioning as they did 30 or 40 years ago. The medication dosages are geared to the 25-year-old healthy American male, and we are giving them to the elderly who are walking around in a stupor most of the time.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

Longevity and advanced medical technology have created different problems since the aged are more likely to suffer from multiple medical chronically disabling conditions. Yet, a system of diagnostic-related reimbursement for medical services fails to address the needs of the rural elderly who might be afflicted with a host of ailments. In addition, institutions which service such patients are extremely hard-pressed for financial alternatives to traditional systems of reimbursement.

Richard McDevitt
Executive Secretary
New York State
Catholic Conference

Health care is not easily accessible, particularly for the homebound elderly. The public health nurse, however, is an accessible part of the rural health care system. But she can visit a patient only once without a physician's order, regardless of what need she sees. The physician has to indicate to her, yes, it's okay with him that she visit his patient. In order for her to continue and have to have Medicare pay for that call, the patient must have a skilled-nursing need. There are a

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Most rural communities cannot generate enough demand to support multiple overlapping health care systems (e.g., linkages for secondary and tertiary care).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

lot of restrictions and there are even more people with health needs that cannot get them through Medicare reimbursement. They would have to pay for them themselves.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

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Where services are being provided, there is a lack of coordination that has led to a duplication of services. At the moment, our agency carries about ten people privately that are also being carried by public health through reimbursement. This is confusing for the agency, the client, the family and for all other health care professionals that are involved in delivering and coordinating services.

Sharon Fish
Program Director
OURS Home Care, Inc.
Delhi Hearing

The cost of health care in New York State and the cost of providing that health care has become a matter of public concern over the past ten years. The public can no longer afford to provide all the health care services that are wanted by everyone in this state. The tragedy of having two hospitals side by side in the same county, in addition to providing less than they could as a single provider of health care, has resulted in an increase in costs, both to industry and agri-business in rural areas. Redundant health care costs, wherever they exist in the system, end up costing the people who buy health insurance coverage. It ends up costing them money because the cost of simply maintaining an extra facility heated, lit, clean, and staffed is extremely expensive.

- Rural communities cannot afford the luxury of multiple single-purpose programs; yet existing linkages between programs have not been adequately forged at the local level.

- It is difficult to alter the basic way medical services are provided without accompanying changes in reimbursement policies. There is an urgent need to improve financing and the regulatory framework for primary care services (e.g., current institutional barriers hinder the formation of hospices in rural areas).

Whether the facility is used or not is not factored in the cost.

Robert Kayser
Administrator
Taylor Brown Hospital
Seneca Falls, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

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I have heard horror story after horror story of state constraints and regulations that forbid us from providing a service in a rural area. There are actually several people who may drive 40 or 50 miles to spend a half hour in the same home providing overlapping services.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Program
Canton Hearing

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The financial restrictions in the hospice program alone are enough to discourage most any organization from applying for designation as such. Most of the smaller counties would not have the eligible patient load to support this program by themselves, nor would they have the up-front money for start-up costs. This is just one example of the unfeasibility of a needed service in a rural community.

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

Rural hospitals believe the reimbursement squeeze and its criteria for ceilings, penalties, volume adjustments, trend factors, are extremely severe when applied to small health care facilities. Such regulations allow for no flexibility in their respective operations. The trend to control reimbursement by cutting back the reimbursement does not, unfortunately, control cost. It places the rural hospital in jeopardy of liquidation. These same institutions, consequently, cannot participate in cost containment programs as much as they would like. There are no funds left for state-of-the-art technological equipment, the development of comprehensive home health care programs, and the expansion of ambulatory care, such as one-day surgical procedures and sharing of mobile CAT scanning equipment.

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

In a small rural hospital, where every employee wears many hats, it is impossible to hire a reimbursement specialist. These postiions are quite prevalent in larger institutions. In 1966, with the advent of Titles XVIII and XIX, the audit teams from Blue Cross and Office of Health Systems Management provided reimbursement help and assistance. This attitude no longer seems to exist.

Doris Warrick
Administrator
Mary McClellan Hospital
Troy Hearing

Home health care services are providing at a very minimal cost a great deal of service. Yet in order to expand our services, the regulations which would permit us to do so are written in such a way that it would be almost impossible to develop a program such as a hospice or nursing home without walls concept.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

New York State has been a leader in the development of health and human services across the country. However, rural New York has not been able to implement many of these services primarily because of regulatory

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Capital financing for construction projects and equipment purchases will become more difficult to obtain for many rural hospitals for a number of reasons, including:
  - Reductions in philanthropy and government support;
  - Restrictions on the use of tax-exempt securities for debt financing of small rural hospital construction projects;
  - High interest rates which will reduce borrowing potential;
  - Inadequate internally-generated revenues.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

requirements as well as the economies of scale required to operate a breakeven program in a rural area.

Stockton Clark
Director
Rural Aging Services Program
New York State Office
for the Aging
Albany Hearing

Local health care initiatives in rural areas are discouraged by regulatory standards and processes.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

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We have been identified as having critical bed shortages for skilled nursing patients. These shortages will continue as our population of elderly increases. A fair distribution of these funds is of critical importance. The small rural institutions have neither the representation nor the bargaining power of larger institutions. Yet our needs have been identified and our construction problems are crucial.

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

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Although the rural hospital is important to the emotional make-up of a community, it has often operated as a very autonomous entity. Very often, the rural hospital has gone about doing its own little thing and perhaps this

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Wide sudden swings in public policy have accompanied the ebb and flow of governmental attention to rural health care. These fluctuations have not been conducive to the development of stable rural health care systems.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

problem has trickled all the way up the ladder to the state and federal governments. It's difficult to get everyone to work together.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home Health
Services
Canandaigua Hearing

It became painfully evident during the freeze instituted during the Nixon Administration that it was impossible for a health care facility to control the cost of supplies. The purveyors were not restricted and their prices were increased. But the non-profit hospital could not adequately reflect these increases in their charge structure. I believe I can shed light on why I am concerned. Recently our hospital was in need of a medicine cabinet.* The hospital supplier quoted a price in the area of $800. An astute hospital employee discovered that the tool boxes sold by Sears were exactly the same product made by the same company and could be purchased for $200. I would like someone to explain why the identical product is worth four times more when sold to health care providers than it is in the Sears catalog.

Doris Warrick
Administrator
Mary McClellan Hospital
Troy Hearing

Medicare provides very limited protection against the cost of long term health care resulting from chronic illness. It focuses instead on providing benefits to cover the cost of illness that requires immediate, but not prolonged, treatment. Medicare also has a strong bias toward providing care in hospital settings, although for the aged and the disabled, home care and nursing home services are often more important.

Eric Kingson
Syracuse Post-Standard
May 7, 1984

I wish to note that the preliminary report on health care deals only with physical health and cites little relationship to mental health. While I recognize that this division is probably due to the way our state bureaucracy is

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The educational thrust of urban training programs often lack relevance to the needs of rural hospitals.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

organized, it is important to recognize that the well-being of our citizens depends on both sound physical and mental health.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

(Commission Note: The mental health topic is discussed in the Human Services and Community Life chapter).

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Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- A flexible planning and regulatory framework that meets the needs of rural communities. Rural hospitals will undoubtedly continue to play a central role in rural health care systems but they will have to retain flexibility in order to adapt to a rapidly changing and unpredictable future.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

State health department regulations need to be tailored to rural needs so that providers can operate realistic, cost-effective services. Laboratory and pharmacy regulations are particularly burdensome for health care facilities in rural areas. Both have been designed for hospitals and other health facilities that operate full-time. There is no distinction for part-time or low volume clinics. In most rural areas, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to recruit or afford the staff which meet the stringent requirements set out in present state regulations.

Shirley Gordon
Executive Director
Family Planning Advocates of
New York State, Inc.

There needs to be a flexible approach to health care so rural areas are not doubly penalized by their initial lack of resources, and their inability to then conform to regulations which assume the existence of such resources.

Shirley Gordon
Executive Director
Family Planning Advocates of
New York State, Inc.

Rural residents should have access to health services at least similar to those enjoyed by their urban cousins, recognizing that health service delivery systems used to provide such access may depend on the individual need of the community it serves.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

There are remedies for small hospitals beyond simply maintaining their stand-alone status. Among these are the development of linkages of larger institutions, the so-called multi-institutional configuration, where small hospitals appropriately provide primary medical care services and certain secondary services. They cannot possibly, as stand-alone insti-

- Continued development of cost-effective alternatives to institutional care for the elderly and chronically ill.

tutions, provide the highly costly, highly technological services necessary and available to urban residents.

Robert Kayser
Administrator
Taylor Brown Hospital
Seneca Falls, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

The Commission on Rural Resources should look with new eyes at how a rural citizen can have access to quality acute care as well as access to health maintenance and illness prevention programs.

Beth Eckler
Registered Nurse
New York State Nurses
Association
Albany Hearing

Struggling rural hospitals with a decreasing day base and utilization rate must be permitted flexibility to modify their structures in order to meet the needs of their constituents. Current regulatory environments may be stifling their ability for beneficial and creative management of their destinies.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

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Preserving independence, enhanced communication, adapting to constant change, weighing loyalty and responsibility, knowing available resources, and coping with the ineffectiveness of the health care system seem to be driving forces in most families confronting aging. If the hand that rocks the cradle still rules the world, then there is much that remains to be done for the rural elderly.

Sr. Mary Walter Boyle
New York State Council
of Catholic Hospitals

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There is a need for expansion of the nursing home without walls concept. A variety of approaches should be explored to help people, wherever possible, maintain their independence and receive health care in the privacy of their own homes.

David Wilson
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Community
Development Program
Canton Hearing

Institutions are not necessarily the answer to increased demands for long term health care. The continued development of cost-effective alternatives to institutional care should be of paramount importance to rural provider organizations and government agencies.

Frank Mandy
Policy Analyst
New York Association
of Homes and Services
for the Aging
Albany Hearing

The State Health Department supports the Commission on Rural Resources's recommendation for continued development of cost-effective alternatives to institutional care for the elderly and has for a number of years assisted in the funding of such alternatives through the administration of state aid local assistance dollars to county home health agency programs. In over 40 of the state's counties, the county home health agency is the only certified provider of home health services, and for many rural elderly persons, it represents the only alternative to institutional care.

Ronald Rouse
Director
Bureau of Program and
Policy Development
New York State Health
Department
Albany Hearing

I think we have a need for more skilled nursing facility beds. But before we pour any money into this project, I would prefer to see more walk-in clinics, more home visits, more use of private facilities, private health profesionals and people who are willing to travel to where the patients are.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

The rural hospital could provide an appropriate level of intermediate care for individuals to be monitored until they were able to get back on their feet. This would be an important alternative to skilled nursing services because of the different requirements on utilization that exist.

Thomas Briggs
Director
Delhi County Office for
the Aging
Delhi Hearing

The bottom line needs to be that home health care renders a beneficial service to citizens in a reasonable and timely fashion without a lot of red tape, restrictions, and administrative overhead.

Martha Allen
Director of Patient
Services
Ontario County Home Health
Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

In view of the aging out of the population and the longer life expectancy rate that most people are enjoying, the use of personal care aides has only proven to a partial answer to the problem of home health care. Major emphasis needs to be placed at the level of skilled nursing needs, while enticing families and the public to maintain health-related level patients and those requiring less services in their homes or intermediate level facilities. Perhaps a personal income tax incentive could be provided

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	to offer this inducement and avoid costly placement of the elderly in hospitals and nursing homes. Irwin Rockoff Commissioner Ontario County Department of Social Services Canandaigua Hearing ********
• Improved supply of health professionals and a stable health care system to support them.	If older New Yorkers are going to remain in rural areas, dramatic increases are needed in home health care and new innovative programs which can be implemented in existing housing projects as well as developed as part of new housing projects. The Commission on Rural Resources has aptly described the need to upgrade rural hospitals and provide them with the necessary flexibility to provide services more economically. Stockton Clark Director Rural Aging Services Program New York State Office for the Aging Albany Hearing A degree of direction needs to be instituted to increase the residency support and the numbers of family physicians to be trained in New York State. This financial support should be made a part of the regular budget in order to encourage family practice residents to settle in rural areas. The importance of this program is demonstrated in that most residents settle within 50 miles of their respective residency programs. Stephen Blatchly Family Practitioner Groton, New York Albany Hearing ********
- Recognition of the importance of rural hospitals in attracting physicians to rural areas.	The report on rural health care places major emphasis on the problems faced by rural hospitals. This is appropriate. The hospital can be viewed as a major business enterprise in

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Maximize the role of nurse practitioners in institutional and non-institutional settings;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

a small community. Yet, in order to remain in business, they need to attract qualified staff. In order to attract staff, they need the facilities and amenities to compete with other areas. They need to maintain a reasonable cash flow. They must adapt to the market. In order to be able to adapt, they need to recognize other allied health services and providers as partners, not threats.

James Feuss
Director of Public Health
Cortland County Health
Department

Most M.D.'s that I have had contact with on the family practice and primary care levels are searching for a practice which can relate to a hospital. Physicians are obviously looking for a secure style of living, quality facilities with adequate support, and a high quality of life. This can range from education for their children to cultural, social, physical and recreational activities to stress levels and community values. If he or she is married, you must be able to sell your region and institution to the spouse. Retention plays a very vital role in the ability of rural communities to recruit physicians.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

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Nurse practitioners and physician's assistants are desperately needed in rural areas with low supplies of general practitioners. Our survey of the area we are in indicates that doctors refused to see patients unless they could pay for the health services they required.

Florence Carpenter
Interim Director
Rushville Health Center
Canandaigua Hearing

Even more important than the need for home health care is the ability of nurse practitioners to assist families in caring for patients and providing support for their tasks.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
  of Western New York
Olean Hearing

Any institution housing the rural elderly should be required to provide regular visits by a health professional who could serve as a consultant to them. I view that as the role of a nurse practitioner. For example, walk-in clinics staffed by nurse practitioners in high-rise buildings for the elderly and attached to health departments and other readily accessible areas, could prove to be a very cost-effective means of averting crisis situations requiring costly hospitalizations. It would also avoid the abuse of hospital emergency rooms, where our elderly population often does not belong. Nursing can be a primary provider of cost-effective health care and can be much more of a provider if some of the roadblocks can be dismantled and the nurse's expertise made available to those who are in the greatest need of their services.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
  for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

Mid-level practitioners are a crucial resource for the health care system in rural areas. There must be adequate support for their training and appropriate licensing recognition.

Shirley Gordon
Executive Director
Family Planning Advocates of
  New York State, Inc.

Although nurses do indeed provide care for those in acute care facilities, other health services offered by nurses are health maintenance and illness prevention. The profession of nursing has long advocated a shift from emphasis on acute hospital care, which is expensive, to preventive or health maintenance care. The profession has also long advocated the

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	desirability of maintaining the elderly and chronically ill at home when at all possible as an alternative to institutionalization. Beth Eckler Registered Nurse New York State Nurses Association Albany Hearing ********
- Recognize the economic impact of increased educational requirements for licensing of nurses and other health professionals.	One inconsistency exists in the Commission's preliminary report on rural health care. While the report on one hand states that an increased range of skills are required for nurses to practice in rural areas, the report recommends against increasing the educational requirements for licensing of nurses. If we are to avoid a serious nursing shortage both in the rural and urban areas, nursing must become a more attractive profession, one that can compete with others. To be competitive with other professional endeavors, college preparation is essential. Beth Eckler Registered Nurse New York State Nurses Association Albany Hearing ********
• Improve telecommunication linkages in order to reduce transportation distances and thus make health care more accessible for the rural populace.	In the health field, electronic communications can be useful in patient education, in continuing professional education, in some aspects of patient care, in administration, and in combatting the deleterious effects of rural isolation. David de Turk Director of Research National Rural Primary Care Association Waterville, Maine Telecommunications technology can be a very effective tool in enhancing the rural hospital's limited access to resources. Not only does it eliminate the relative isolation of health professionals in their attempts to obtain

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

continuing education and in-service training, but it also provides a means of access to important research and reference materials. A telecommunications network among hospital libraries could enable rural health personnel in remote sites to exchange materials with their counterparts in large metropolitan-based institutions.

John J. Finn
President
Northeastern New York
Hospital Association

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- Strengthen the role of preventive health care and seek to integrate the activities of local health departments with public and private providers.

Much more emphasis needs to be placed on less costly preventive approaches to health care. Provision of educational programs by qualified health professionals could be very effective in giving the community of elderly answers to some of their health concerns. Studies have shown that the more knowledgeable a person is relative to his or her chronic condition, the better their health and the more cooperative they will be with their health regime.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

Rural counties should be encouraged to continue to concentrate efforts in preventive health care and should utilize such agencies as the Office for the Aging to further develop such programs and to monitor the elderly.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

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- Improve the support system for geriatric and other training programs that address the needs of rural populations.

We need more health professionals with an interest in the needs of the elderly. Nurses are the most likely health care personnel for this task in light of their background and expertise. The key to availability is third party reimbursement for non-institutional services.

Jean Sweeney Donner
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing Services
  for the Elderly
Elmira, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

Families still provide about 80 percent of the care of older people who remain in the home and community. However, families also need help with some of the more technical or perhaps unpleasant aspects of care-giving in the home. It is vitally important that the training and provision of services be upgraded and monitored according to the needs of rural communities. Moreover, I believe there is a role for the community colleges and agricultural and technical colleges to provide an additional training and upgrading of the skills of personal care aides.

Sven Hammer
Sven Hammer and Associates
Silver Creek, New York
Olean Hearing

One community-based service that we have supported very highly is adult day care programs. Home and health day care has been used in conjunction with church groups. It is a program for heavily impaired people and many of these people go daily or several times a week to therapies at a nearby hospital with transportation provided for them. Generally, this is an underdeveloped service in rural areas. The major problem, of course, is transportation. People who are frail obviously can't travel great distances and aren't able to get to a program at all unless transportation is provided.

Shirley Sampson
Health Systems Agency
  of Western New York
Olean Hearing

Although we can't expect a para-professional to understand how medication works or the side effects of such medication, it is possible to expand their role so that they are at least capable of administering medication like a family member would do. We ought to expand the role to allow home health aides to perform anything that we could also teach a family member to do. I don't think we want them to take over the job of a nurse, but there is indeed room to expand their role.

Lauren Snyder
Supervisor
Yates County Home
Health Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

A system of coordination and cooperation needs to be developed to end the duplication of health care services in rural areas, particularly when many patients are entitled to and eligible for appropriate reimbursement. I hope there will be a coordinated effort made to help the disabled residents of our rural counties, especially the elderly.

Sharon Fish
Program Director
OURS Home Care, Inc.
Delhi Hearing

At the present time, the Medicaid reimbursement program is at a ridiculous level. I am paid approximately 50 percent or less of my regular fee. The alternative to an office visit is a trip to the nearest emergency room which is being done vis a vis the fire department emergency squad and ambulance corps. In addition, the billing system, while better than it was, is still cumbersome and ridiculous in the amount of material required for each form.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

- Improve local planning capabilities to insure the delivery of appropriate services.

The development and maintenance of a health data base is essential for effective planning and evaluation of health services. The data should be organized in a fashion facilitating the assembly of rural data in various ways. Furthermore, special attention will be needed to adequately complement objective data, such as cost and usage characteristics, with some subjective information related to quality of life and social values.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

Local health departments should play a major role in leading, assisting, and allowing appropriate, alternate programs to develop. This does not mean that they should become the major providers, but they should play a role in encouraging and accommodating improvements in the health care continuum. The role of social services, mental health and county health departments, area Offices for the Aging, and other medical/social services must be appreciated by local hospitals. They all must work together.

James V. Feuss
Director of Public Health
Cortland County Health Department

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- Improve linkages to assure access to appropriate secondary and tertiary services.

Linkages must be improved among all health services, both mental and physical, in addition to such complementary activities, such as transportation, education, recreation, and employment. I believe there is a total interrelationship among issues that affect the quality and delivery of rural health care.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Develop cost containment policies that do not overburden rural health care delivery systems.

- Encourage more flexible reimbursement policies that allow the development of alternatives to traditional health care systems.

- Support and enhance rural ambulance/first response corps.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Services must be sustained even when the numbers served are small. The expectations for ratio of patient cost to patient volume must be higher in rural areas where volume is, by definition, small. New York State must continue to support rural programs in small communities.

Shirley Gordon
Executive Director
Family Planning Advocates of
New York State, Inc.

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Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• The decentralization of responsibility for program management and operation is a desirable trend that should be reinforced. How can local community involvement and support in the planning, design, implementation, and maintenance of rural health care be maintained and enhanced?	A clear statement of health service program goals, policies, and approaches would facilitate a local participation in the formulation of delivery activities for which participants could take some measure of responsibility. The relative consistency of state goals, policies, approaches, and funding is essential to promote the effective allocation of scarce local resources. Richard Bornholdt Chairman Schuyler County Planning Commission Canandaigua Hearing In order to tailor our rural health care system to individual county needs, the state must recognize the planning and design of local agencies, such as public health, mental health, social services, and Offices for the Aging, instead of imposing statewide regulations or mandates that may not appropriately meet county needs. If the state really cares about local input, they must demonstrate a willingness to listen. They must promote the personal commitment and involvement of local organizations in developing their policies and establishing laws and regulations. Irwin Rockoff Commissioner Ontario County Department of Social Services Canandaigua Hearing ********
• Approaches that attack one particular aspect of the rural primary care problem, such as the lack of appropriate personnel or facilities, often provide fragmented short-term "solutions" to long-term problems. How can the temptation to deal with immediate concerns be carefully balanced against the need for thoughtful long-range planning?	When it results in depriving people of services or making it grossly inconvenient for them to receive necessary health care services, it is clearly inappropriate to close a small rural hospital. But where services can continue to be provided on a more cost-effective basis, it is indeed appropriate to examine ways to reduce unnecessary hospital capacity in rural areas. Robert Kayser Administrator Taylor Brown Hospital Seneca Falls, New York Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Our immediate concern for short-term beds, especially in the area of acute care, is being met in a reasonable and adequate manner. With the large numbers of persons backed up in hospitals awaiting nursing home beds, it is quite apparent that this is a major area of concern for health planners and policymakers.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

There are some areas in which there may be too many rural hospitals and hospital beds. If we are to have sufficient resources to modernize and maintain those rural hospitals which are isolated and represent the sole source of care of the population they serve, the existence of some unnecessary rural hospitals must be acknowledged and addressed just as the existence of unnecessary urban hospitals must also be acknowledged and addressed.

Jonathan Rudolph
Assistant Director
Finger Lakes Health
Systems Agency
Canandaigua Hearing

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- How can the rural hospital be aided in its efforts to deal with a complex set of incentives and disincentives as it seeks to utilize new technology?

The rural hospital should probably be the heart of the rural health care system. It must be provided with economic incentives to function in this capacity. Incentives to establish relationships with complementary institutions, incentives to support the delivery of health services with new and innovative technological advances, and a wide latitude for local initiatives should be encouraged, monitored, and evaluated for effectiveness.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

Rural hospitals can be aided in their efforts to use new technologies by allowing them flexibility in terms of decertification of beds in cases where there is a genuine lack of

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can hospitals be encouraged to assume the role of a "conduit for change" in the rural health care system?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

alternative placements.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

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Through our hospital's affiliation with another institution, we are able to provide care on a cost-effective basis. More importantly, because we are able to share certain things between the two institutions, the cost of expensive technology and administrative overhead is alleviated. Through this affiliation we are also able to attract and retain a large number of well-qualified physicians and other skilled health professionals. We share the same Board of Trustees which facilitates consistent policy development. Where sharing can take place, for example, in data processing, in billing, and in joint purchasing, we take advantage of these opportunities.

Robert Kayser
Administrator
Taylor Brown Hospital
Seneca Falls, New York
Canandaigua Hearing

A consortium of health delivery providers should be the local conduit for change in the rural health care system. Hospitals alone cannot assume that role because of their vested interests. There should not be one set of rules for all of New York State's health delivery system. Based on the service needs, levels of health care should be county specific.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How will public policymakers obtain a clear set of guidelines that will assist them in becoming steadier and more effective partners in efforts to improve rural health care? For instance, it is difficult to come to grips with the true underlying problems of rural health care by using strategies and regulations that do not distinguish between rural and urban needs and conditions.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

It is a rare occurrence when a practicing physician from a rural community sits on any of the important planning level committees of the State Health Department.

Stephen Blatchly
Family Practitioner
Groton, New York
Albany Hearing

The needs of rural areas are different than the needs of urban areas. While the rules should not necessarily be broken, they can be more flexible, depending on the area of need. When local government abdicates their responsibility and expects the private sector to pick up the whole ball of wax, it is doing a great injustice to the people of the county who might fall through the cracks in the health care system.

Sharon Fish
Program Director
OURS Home Care, Inc.
Delhi Hearing

Well-aimed regulations appropriate to rural environments are far more effective than blanket policies that lack flexibility and application to different levels of operation. Regulations should not place managers in positions of total compliance for restrictive results-oriented purposes. This frustrates, and in some cases, will eliminate creativity and the generation of new ideas. Without incentives and opportunities to utilize creativity and practical expertise, there may be only limited improvement to the health care system in rural New York.

Floyd Metzger
Administrator
Guthrie Clinic, Ltd.
Sayre, Pennsylvania
Canandaigua Hearing

Small rural hospitals, according to the expenditure limits of the new proposed section of the Public Health Law, set annual limitations for the years 1984 through 1987 relating to the capital costs associated with all certificate of need applications. These monies would be allocated among the Health Systems Agencies' geographic areas of the state. Distribution of these monies are of vital concern to us. We have traditionally felt the tug of war, upstate vs. downstate. We also have concern about the distribution of these funds on a regional HSA level. There is a need to deal realistically with the plight of the individual rural hospital as an important factor in the distribution of these funds. Who will develop these criteria?

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

One of the key regulatory pieces that the Department of Health has developed is the definition of a "rural hospital." This allows health planners to make special provisions for such hospitals in the certificate of need and reimbursement processes. This definition became official departmental regulation in early 1982 and applies four weighted criteria which recognize the unique nature of rural hospitals as distinct from urban and suburban hospitals. These four criteria are the size of the facility, its population density, number of annual admissions, and the size of the facility budget. Use of this regulation allows the Department to focus annually on the financial and physical plant needs of rural hospitals. In 1984, 46 of the state's 280 hospitals are identified as rural hospitals by this regulation.

Ronald Rouse
Director
Bureau of Program and
Policy Development
New York State Health
Department
Albany Hearing

The original intention of the regulatory measure which established the State Health Department definition of a "rural hospital" was to implement a rural hospital library program. However, in a classic illustration of the stringency and inflexibility of health care regulations, the weighted criteria used to design the parameters for this library program were then applied across-the-board.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The current focus on cost containment suggests careful consideration be given to modifying the existing number and type of health professionals being trained. How can the training, licensure, and reimbursement of health professionals be made more responsive to rural requirements and constraints?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

As a result, although the Commission on Rural Resources has identified 87 hospitals as being located in rural counties, only one-third of these institutions can be classified as "rural hospitals" according to the Health Department's regulation.

John J. Finn
President
Northeastern New York
Hospital Association

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Reducing reimbursement rates is not the answer to the problems which plague rural health care providers. Increasing reimbursement so that we may launch ourselves into programs ensuring cost containment and reducing acute care must be studied. If it is not pursued and implemented, we will be put out of business. Should we cease to exist, who will address the needs of rural citizens?

John McDonald
Administrator
Schuyler Hospital
Canandaigua Hearing

The federal and state governments have a responsibility to support basic health programs in areas that cannot defray their own costs. If New York State is to continue to grow or even maintain its present level of population, health care must be a necessary ingredient to ensure such growth.

Irwin Rockoff
Commissioner
Ontario County Department
of Social Services
Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- There are many very small rural communities where the aggregate demand is insufficient to support any permanent health care system. Do federal and state governments have a responsibility to identify and support basic health programs in areas that will never be able to totally defray their own costs?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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With virtually no private insurance to cover preventive services in rural clinics, the state must fill the void and assure a funding level to enable family planning clinics to, at a very minimum, maintain services to the medically indigent who cannot go to private doctors for subsidized care.

Shirley Gordon
Executive Director
Family Planning Advocates
of New York State, Inc.

If all rural residents are to be provided access to health services similar to their urban cousins, state and federal financial support in some instances will be essential. The delivery of these services should be adapted to the local needs in the most cost-efficient manner consistent with human values.

Richard Bornholdt
Chairman
Schuyler County Planning
Commission
Canandaigua Hearing

The State Health Department may have recognized the distance that people have to travel for health care in terms of their medical regulations with respect to facilities in urban centers. Yet, this is not evident in our very rural area. The Health Department told us that if we could not afford the $100,000 to upgrade our newborn nursery, we should close the unit down. Patients will be forced to go elsewhere and that does not represent any attitude of concern for health care accessibility.

Doris Warrick
Administrator
Mary McClellan Hospital
Troy Hearing

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Elementary, Secondary, and Higher Education

The state's most valuable resource is so much taken for granted that we hardly ever even think of it as a resource. It's people - skilled, educated, productive people. That's what our economy, and the economy of every state, is built upon.

Unfortunately, New York - unlike just about every state in the union - is losing that fundamental resource. According to a recent study sponsored by the Business Council of New York State, 700,000 New Yorkers left the state between 1970 and 1980 alone. More alarming, however, is that tens of thousands of New York's young, affluent, and best-educated are among that number. Between 1975 and 1980, New York suffered a net loss of 200,000 people with a full or partial college education, and 180,000 residents between the ages of 20 and 34.

When they left, these people left behind a proportionately higher percentage of people who are unskilled, unproductive, and unemployed - that is, those who do not contribute to the state's coffers, but take from them. The consequence is that even more is required of the proportionately fewer wage-earners left behind. They are called upon to bear an even heavier tax burden. It's a vicious circle that squeezes ever tighter on New York taxpayers.

"A Vicious Circle"
Editorial Page
Albany Times Union
October 2, 1984

Education is intrinsically woven into all of the nine topics of review before the Commission on Rural Resources. It is an important and encompassing factor that significantly impacts upon the quality, breadth, and depth of rural life.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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Freeman Van Wickler
District Superintendent
Delaware-Chenango BOCES

Introduction

The quality of education at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels is vital to the future commercial, industrial, cultural, and social development of rural New York and the state as a whole. Quality health care systems and economic development strategies, for example, both hinge upon an outstanding and integrated educational system. Yet, many highly educated youth are migrating to areas of greater employment opportunity in New York State and beyond.

Education makes a significant impact on the delivery of important human services to a highly diverse population of rural residents with varying backgrounds and interests. Supported by small rural libraries, cultural centers, and museums, rural schools and colleges are the main source of cultural, indoor recreation, adult education, and information resources available to citizens of average means.

There are 724 public school districts and 43 Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) overall in New York State, of which approximately 400 and 26, respectively, can be classified as rural. Of the State University of New York's 64 campus units, 36 are located in rural New York. Twenty-eight of the state's 116 independent colleges and universities are located in rural areas.

Educational institutions have been a dominant force in rural New York's overall development patterns. At the K-12 level, the school is a focal point of community life. Many parents have strongly supported the positive educational climate found in the small elementary school. In addition to its traditional educational role, the rural school often serves as a center for community social activities and cultural enrichment. Many rural residents, therefore, are extremely vocal in their opposition to school district consolidation because of their desire to preserve the school's unique identity within the community.

Public school enrollment is growing in some school districts, but declining in others. However, school enrollments in rural counties have not declined as rapidly as in metropolitan counties. Between 1973 and 1981, the state's metropolitan counties lost over 20 percent of their public elementary and secondary school population, while rural counties as a group experienced an 18 percent decrease.

Another significant trend which has emerged in New York State's rural counties during the past decade has been the increased reliance on local tax revenue to fund elementary and secondary education. The percentage of state contributions to rural education budgets has decreased.

The future effectiveness of elementary and secondary education in rural New York will depend in large part upon the resourcefulness and creativity of school districts in integrating a new wave of communications technology into academic and vocational curricula. Such innovations would greatly reduce the friction of time and distance. Indeed, interactive telecommunications, while enabling students to have access to the talents of an instructor in a remote site utilizing state-of-the-art teaching aids, looms as a viable alternative to traditional physical reorganization/consolidation for many small, rural school districts.

Increased state aid and other financial resources are also of importance because it is believed that a gradual shift away from real property taxation as the primary source of educational funding is a key to accomplishing equal educational opportunities. Many rural school districts currently favor a more equitable aid distribution based on personal income and block grant funding, as was initiated by the State Legislature during the 1984 session.

While the small rural elementary school is an important symbol of community identity and activity, New York State's network of outstanding colleges and universities is also rich in its geographic and academic diversity. A majority of the campuses located within the State University of New York, the largest and most diverse public multi-campus university system in the world, are located in rural areas. These include the land-grant colleges at Cornell University (the statutory colleges of Agriculture and Life Science, Human Ecology, Industrial and Labor Relations, and Veterinary Medicine) as well as Cooperative Extension Service's strong network of county extension agents and offices. Key roles in advancing technology and educational preparation have also been played by the School of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse University, the College of Ceramics located at Alfred University, the five Agricultural and Technical Colleges and thirty community colleges located in rural counties. In addition, eight of the University's Colleges of Arts and Science are located in rural areas. They have been instrumental in preparing a cadre of qualified teachers for the state's school system. Diverse programs and disciplines are also offered by New York State's 116 independent colleges and universities, over twenty of which are located in rural counties.

During the past decade, there has been rising concern over the ability of New York State and the United States economies to compete successfully in a sophisticated, post-industrial information society. In order to encourage high technology and research facilities to do business in New York State, a unique government-industry-university consortium has been forged. Two of the most notable products of this effort have been the Center for Industrial Innovation, located at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, and the

Centers for Advanced Technology, currently underway at seven of the state's universities. These efforts in high technology research and development, if cultivated carefully, have the potential to generate additional jobs and revenue in rural New York during the coming decades.

Among the chief problems currently facing many educational institutions in New York's rural areas is the uncertain thrust of vocational-technical education. Such education is often found to be duplicative, inconsistent, and costly in its efforts. These troubles would be greatly eased by increased program articulation among BOCES, community colleges, Agricultural and Technical Colleges, and related post-secondary institutions. Moreover, increased financial assistance for full and part-time students, the provision of SUNY campuses with greater management and fiscal autonomy, and a strengthening of the partnership between education, government, and the private sector in important education, skills, and training areas is required.

In sum, the role of education in rural New York is two-fold. On one hand, education has an important responsibility to provide students of all ages with basic competencies, technical expertise, cultural enrichment, and an equality of opportunity in order to readily adapt to their living and working environments. In addition, education in rural localities has a generally unrealized potential to enhance economic development and human services delivery, and thereby improve the quality of life for the people of the State of New York.

At the suggestion of Education Workshop participants, the identification of educational trend, strengths, weaknesses, goals and public policy questions in New York State was divided into two sections: K-12 and higher education. This method, in their estimation, best facilitated discussion of the appropriate subject matter and is used in the sections that follow.

Where Rural New York Is Today: K-12

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends and Assumptions

- The small community and the small elementary school are popular with an increasing number of parents.

- Evidence of countertrends - although population inflow has increased in rural areas, school enrollments have continued to decline in some school districts.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The ultimate future of our rural communities rests with the ability of residents to respond to opportunities for economic growth. Education, its qualities and availability, is paramount to expanding and developing the present and future skills and abilities of rural New Yorkers.

Robert J. Maurer
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York State Education
Department
Albany Hearing

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In a recently conducted biennial census conducted in our school district, the census taker pointed out that there are 147 new youngsters, ages zero to 4 living in the district. Many of the parents of these children have moved into the school district within the last two years. When questioned as to the reason for their move, a vast majority cited the quality of education offered by a smaller rural school district as a major factor.

Lawrence Kiley
Superintendent of Schools
Union Springs Central School District
Syracuse Hearing

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The periodic rise and fall of births in the United States creates waves of people that move through the age groups alternately building up and eroding our instititional beaches. Nowehere is this more evident than in our elementary schools.

Peter Francese
"Schools Forced to Close"
The Middletown Times Herald Record
April 20, 1984

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When the size of the school district as measured by enrollments falls below 1,000, particularly where we've further divided them into categories of those with enrollments between 500 and 1,000, and those below 500, you see the PEP test scores

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	tending to be less. More and more of these students are falling below the statewide reference point. David Monk Assistant Professor for Educational Administration Cornell University
	New York's rural schools, the cultural mainstays of their towns, are coping poorly with mounting financial and population problems. Peter Coy "Rural New York Schools Having Financial Woes" Albany Times-Union March 18, 1984
	********
- Yet, school enrollments in rural counties are not declining as rapidly as as they are in metropolitan counties. Indeed, many rural districts are experiencing a sharp increase;	In studies in our school district, we have found that in the classrooms below grade 4 enrollments are beginning to pick up a little. I think that our projections show no more decline at the elementary level in our schools. However, the decline is really coming in Grades 7 to 12 for the next 8 years. Lawrence Kiley Superintendent of Schools Union Springs Central School District Syracuse Hearing
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- With declining student populations in some elementary and secondary schools, there will be a surplus of resources, particularly among educational facilities and teaching specialists.	Changing demographic and economic conditions in the state have made district reorganization a consideration for many districts. As a result of reorganization, some districts have been able to pool resources to improve economy and efficiency in delivering educational services. By reorganizing, these districts receive an additional 20 percent state incentive in operating aid and 30 percent in building aid.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- A new wave of communications technology has direct implications for rural school districts by reducing information distances.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The reorganization incentive aid is continued for the next 13 years.

Robert J. Maurer
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York State Education
Department
Albany Hearing

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The new technologies which your report identifies as an area of concern are transforming every work place and every occupation. No student should be denied access to educational opportunity to acquire necessary skills and knowledge to secure gainful employment and become a productive citizen in this new era. Generally, we have found that higher wealth districts provide students almost 100 percent advantage regarding access to computers than lower wealth districts do.

Robert J. Maurer
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York State Education
Department
Albany Hearing

New technologies provide an unprecedented chance to improve lifelong education. They afford the best opportunities we've ever had to increase quality, productivity, and enhance equitable access for students, whether homebound or in rural school districts or urban cores. In addition, it can help learners of all ages, particularly the aged and those who require retraining because of shifts in our industrial base.

Gregory Benson, Jr.
Director
Center for Learning
Technologies
New York State Education
Department
(quoted in) Watertown
Daily Times
October 6, 1984

Education is among the most important catalysts that affect an individual's life. For many of us it has provided the chance for mobility, the chance for growth and the chance to leave this planet a little better than it was when we so

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- There will be a continuing number of "necessarily small rural school districts" in the foreseeable future.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

unexpectedly arrived. There is inherent discrimination against the rural populace in schools in anything which can be called small. The discrimination is economically based. Computer utilization, especially CSAAI and telecommunications, presents significant opportunities to enrich rural counties that have not been presented before. The concept of distance and availability is diminishing.

George Mack
Superintendent of Schools
Walton Central School
District
Delhi Hearing

The incentive aid for school district reorganization is quite attractive. I've looked at some of the figures for our districts, and it's not money that is holding the schools back. It's local pride. That's the real issue.

Edward Huntington
District Superintendent
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-
Essex BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

Please realize that small K through 12 buildings that were built years ago and have been maintained rather well by people in their community are a center of social interaction. It's the place where tremendous numbers of activities take place. It has become a terribly important symbol to the people it has served and their identity with that K-12 school district is very, very strong. They are more apt to share students with other districts. My perception is they are less apt to join and consolidate.

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Olean Hearing

We have school districts that have as few as 250 students in Grades K through 12. We have grappled with the issue of reorganization. Many of our school districts are reluctant to give up their identity to join with a school district to centralize, even with the new funding and

- The growing importance of teachers as "instructional managers;"
- In-service instruction in classroom management techniques is currently transmitted to teachers in rural school districts via closed circuit television.

- Continued consolidation/centralization of school districts.

incentive aid that has been put in place by the state legislature.

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Olean Hearing

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The rural school teacher will be less a dissemination of subject content and more a subject guide and learning consultant. Teachers will set the learning goals, provide the learning resources and add a pinch of inspiration and guidance. They also will check progress, answer difficult questions, and lead periodic discussions of learned materials.

William R. Oates
School of Communications
University of Alabama
(testifying before) "Joint
Congressional Hearing on the
Changing Needs of Rural America"
July 21, 1982

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As a percentage of the high school student body that is enrolled in the high school mathematics course, it was 73 percent in the large districts as opposed to 49 percent in the smaller school districts. The trend is a linear trend. As you get into the smaller and smaller districts, a smaller percentage of the students are enrolled in mathematics, science, and foreign language courses. There appears to be a striking difference in the willingness of students in small rural school districts to enroll in these courses.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- Interaction between "school family" and rural communities.
    - The congeniality and friendliness between teachers and parents, who very often find themselves as neighbors with similar interests, has a positive effect on students.
- The rural school is a focal point of community life.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I commend your recognition of the considerable potential for rural schools to assist in the development of economic and social services in a small town. Too many in our state fail to see this aspect of the value of improving rural schools. In addition, improving the economic life of our small communities must be seen as a legitimate concern for all New York State residents. If no real job opportunities exist locally, the cycle still won't run as it should because new graduates must leave the area to find decent jobs.

Charles Davis
Davis/McDonald Associates
Dryden, New York
Syracuse Hearing

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Two major strengths of rural schools are community involvement with the school and the one-on-one relationship between students and teachers found in these schools.

Jim Reagen
"Rural Education Report Released"
Ogdensburg Journal
March 16, 1984

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Rural schools usually serve a dual purpose. They not only provide the educational needs of their pupils, but also must assume a key role in the life and vitality of the communities they serve. Education is only one element of the rural development that we seek, but it is a force that I believe shapes others.

Robert J. Maurer
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York State Education Department
Albany Hearing

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In the case of a graduate of our school system who was recently interviewed for a highly classified and responsible position within the

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

  - In addition to its traditional role, the school is a repository for social activities and cultural enrichment;

  - Pride in school and community is prevalent. Many rural residents remain steadfast in their opposition to school district consolidation, especially at the elementary level, because of their desire to keep schools within the community.

- The positive educational climate found in rural schools encourages student participation in the learning process.

  - The "natural laboratory-like qualities" of rural areas enable students to receive first-hand exposure to the environment;

  - The informal nature of small-town politics afford students a chance to understand and actively participate in local government.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

United States Department of Defense, the personnel officer who conducted the interview offered the following comment. "We look for students from small towns and small schools. They tend to demonstrate a high level of dedication, responsibility, and self-reliance".

Lawrence Kiley
Superintendent of Schools
Union Springs Central
School District
Syracuse Hearing

There are some awfully skilled people who have worked in trades and occupations for many years and are now teaching. I marvel at them because they have very fine techniques in dealing with students. In some cases, youngsters that have been turned off by school have responded to these instructors with new determination and interest.

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Olean Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Insufficient educational opportunities for special populations, such as literacy, job training, resource sharing, and telecommunications.
    - For example, the number of microcomputers per student in rural schools is appallingly low.
- Declining enrollments have more seriously impacted on programs in rural schools.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

In one rural district we have found several apparent learning disabled children who have never recieved a comprehensive learning disabled evaluation and who have never received an educational program that adequately addresses their needs.

Joanne Hunt Piersma
Staff Attorney
Legal Services of Central
New York
Protective and Advocacy
Project
Syracuse Hearing

Limited population density results in there being fewer pupils with any one handicapping condition in one school district. As a result, handicapped pupils may either be put in highly segregated placements at centralized BOCES programs or grouped with pupils in their home districts who have widely varying needs. Time after time our office is contacted by parents who are attempting to obtain an appropriate special education program for their child. When we contact the school we find an appalling lack of adherence to or even acknowledgement of the procedural protections mandated by state and federal regulations. At least a part of this problem stems from the fact that rural school districts are themselves handicapped by inexperienced personnel with little or no access to outside resources and support.

Joanne Hunt Piersma
Staff Attorney
Legal Services of Central
New York
Protective and Advocacy Project
Syracuse Hearing

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Rural areas have the districts with the highest percentage of adults who have not graduated from high school in New York State according to the latest census.

Robert J. Maurer
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York State Education
Department
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- This presents an increased burden to the rural taxpayer since small or sparse rural districts must increase the fraction of their local income spent on education faster than their metropolitan cousins;

- Since rural school districts tend to be small, even a slight reduction (e.g., 20 or 30 students) can be significant.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Predominately rural areas have unique school district attributes and socioeconomic characteristics since such areas contain most of the low wealth, low spending school districts in the state. Districts in these areas have a per pupil expenditure level that is more than 15 percent below the statewide average. Average income levels are also lower than those in the state as a whole.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University

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It is the belief in our area that current state aid formulas do not take into account the true impact of declining enrollment in rural areas as well as the geographic sparsity of our populations. In addition, as has been demonstrated in numerous reports, with the heavy reliance on property wealth, there exists within our state significant discrepancies among districts and their ability to raise local tax revenues while providing educational services equivalent to surrounding areas.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Genesee School District
Syracuse Hearing

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The impact of enrollment reduction on a small rural school is just unbelievable when compared to a city-based school, and something needs to be done about them. The most important problem in rural school districts associated with enrollment is program offerings. While the requirements placed upon a school district by the recently-adopted Regents Action Plan are very demanding, these requirements will prove to be more difficult for the small, rural school district than for the larger suburban or urban school district. One only has to review the second language, technology, and advanced placement course requirements to conclude that student enrollment plays a key role. School

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Insufficient career guidance for students. For example, many students are dissuaded from pursuing a college education. In addition, students are generally unaware of the numerous agricultural opportunities, other than farming, available to them.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

districts with limited enrollments per grade level will experience significantly greater difficulty in achieving the Regents Action Plan requirements than will school districts with several classes per grade level.

R[illegible]ld Poletto
District Superintendent
Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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We've got to spend more time talking about what are our expectations of guidance. What do we want counselors to do? We have gotten into the dialogue. They push papers. They do master schedules and assign kids. Do they really counsel? Do guidance counselors receive the training which enables them to effectively deal with the problems and concerns of today's youth?

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Olean Hearing

We need more guidance in the small districts, but I don't know if that's going to be sufficient. It strikes me, perhaps, as a band-aid kind of approach. The problem is more deep seated than that. It has to do with the ambitions and orientations of rural youth that begins at a very early age.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
  Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse Hearing

There are a number of factors that result in our rural youth having limited aspirations. I think the rural population is composed of a relatively high percent of people who do not have a college education, so I think that may be part of the problem as to why they lack the incentive to continue their education. I also think it is a matter of how they were brought up and what has been discussed in the home. What are the parents expecting of them? As a consequence, if they are coming out of a family that hasn't received a college education, I think that is where the blinders develop. It becomes almost incumbent upon schools to provide that

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The two-sided controversy surrounding school district reorganization/consolidation.
  - Separating the school district from the community causes an area to lose a significant portion of its local identity;
  - In addition, as school districts are centralized, a sizable proportion of the adult population who participate in school activities is lost;
  - Therefore, rural residents are unwilling to sacrifice local prerogatives for regional benefits. On the other hand, many school district administrators believe that consolidation is a financial imperative which can have significant benefits in the long-run. They feel money saved through reorganization could be poured back into the school to improve the delivery of educational services.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

ingredient. That is why I believe there should be strong guidance programs in rural schools to help, if nothing more than to motivate.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

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It makes little sense to bribe taxpayers into taking action that is not in the best interests of either the students or the taxpayer and you can keep increasing that incentive and you can point to the districts responding to the incentive aid. Yet if it doesn't make sense for a school district to consolidate, I don't think you can call it a legislative success and point to instances in which districts have come together, particularly as a by-product of incentive aid, when you have students travelling unconscionably long distances on a daily basis on a school bus.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse Hearing

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Reorganization cannot be an across-the-board solution. We need to know the conditions under which consolidation makes sense as well as the conditions under which it makes no sense at all. We need to know more about the alternatives to full scale consolidation.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Inherent limitations of rural school districts.
  - Program offerings/staff;
  - Aspirations of people;
  - Geography (e.g., school district consolidation impacts more severely on student transportation in rural areas);

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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I think a perception may exist that we do have an expended elective offering in rural schools. I don't think that perception is accurate.

Lawrence Kiley
Superintendent of Schools
Union Springs Central
School District
Syracuse Hearing

Dr. Ernest Boyer recently observed that we must achieve excellence with our present teaching staff. In accepting his analysis which is perfectly logical, we must then direct our attention to in-service for our present staff.

Although I have found the instructors of adult education courses to be basically skilled in their trade, some definitely lack skills in sharing their knowledge with adult students in a manner which is progressive and easy to learn. Even though I felt that the instructor knew his work, he was not able to disseminate the information to the students. One can know a subject, but he or she may not be qualified to teach that subject to another person.

Howard Smith
Franklinville, New York
Olean Hearing

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If we have an ill-trained non-enthusiastic language teacher, for example, in a small rural school district, we can't really expect students to say "We're going to sign up for it," merely because that language is offered.

Charles Davis
Davis/McDonald Associates
Dryden, New York
Syracuse Hearing

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The Commission report notes the problems caused by difficult weather, meager transportation systems and geography. For handicapped children with possible mobility problems and with an intensified need for access to specialized services, rural isolation may be an especially difficult trap. As a result, children are placed in programs that are inappropriate to their needs or they have to spend an inordinate amount of time being transported to distant programs.

Joanne Hunt Pierama
Staff Attorney
Legal Services of Central
New York
Protective and Advocacy Project
Syracuse Hearing

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- Access to cultural resources;

Rural life is characterized by geographical remoteness that provides the librarian with few other cultural and/or informational centers from which to draw support. Geographical isolation also makes it impossible for the rural librarian to have regular professional contacts with other librarians or information and cultural specialists. This situation is considerably different in a metropolitan area, where one has relatively easy access to multiple resources - generally within the radius of a few blocks. In many rural communities, there are no additional sources of information to augment those of the public library.

Dr. Bernard Vavrek, Professor
School of Library Science
Clarion State College
"Joint Congressional
Hearing on the Changing Needs
of Rural America"
July 21, 1982

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- Financial base.

The financial constraints of the local communities put them in a very tough situation and they sometimes will make a determination as to allocation of dollars, in other words, how many people are served. Sometimes the amount of dollars needed to support one handicapped child in a school system and provide all the related services that are mandated under the law is an extremely expensive proposition. It's not that the local community is uninterested in providing the services and does not appreciate the needs of the particular handicapped child. It comes down to a question of dollars, and limited resources within the community places their backs against the wall.

Irene Platt
Commissioner
New York State Commission on
the Quality of Care for
the Mentally Disabled
Albany Hearing

Property wealth in most small rural school districts is limited to residential and farm properties. These districts do not enjoy the benefits of taxes paid by large corporations which in turn pass their property taxes, including school taxes, on to the consumer as part of a commodity's price.

Ronald Poletto
District Superintendent
Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

I think cost is a big factor for a rural school district, coupled with the isolation and limited resources which can sometimes be overwhelming. There are some rural counties in which school districts cannot find a physical therapist for children who need one.

Joanne Hunt Piersma
Staff Attorney
Legal Services of Central
New York
Protective and Advocacy Project
Syracuse Hearing

The key is resources. Most school districts that I've been associated with, when it comes budget time and the budget vote, the monies that were going to be set aside for staff development and curriculum development kind of go by the wayside as a budget cutting device. In the end, there's far less than one percent of a budget, in most cases, devoted to such development.

Ronald Poletto
District Superintendent
Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Availability of quality personnel, particularly due to low salaries and limited employment opportunities for both spouses.
    - Mathematics, English and foreign language teachers are less well-trained and less experienced in small, rural districts compared to large, urban districts;
    - There is a greater incidence of first-year teachers in small districts compared to large districts;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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There are two factors at play in the case of a school district's limited financial base. First, the rural districts face higher costs than do other districts. In other words, it costs more to do the same thing in a rural district than it does in an otherwise equivalent district and these differences in cost have been alluded to by other speakers. They stem primarily from diseconomy of a small scale operation. The second point is that expenditure levels in rural districts are lower than elsewhere. Part of this is due to cost of living differences, but even when you control for differences in the cost of living across regions of the state, you still find that the rural districts spend at lower levels on a per pupil basis.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse University

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I am in total agreement with the state as far as upgrading the teaching profession and hiring more qualified teachers. On the other hand, we have got to bring the training programs closer to home. I would hate to think that we'd have to wait 16 years to implement a program to accomplish this objective.

Charles Smith
Superintendent of Schools
Andes, New York
Delhi Hearing

The education of children with special needs tends to be a state of the art profession with constant new developments in research programs and material. In many rural school districts, access to this new information is difficult and limited.

Joanne Hunt Piersma
Staff Attorney
Legal Services of Central
New York
Protective and Advocacy Project
Syracuse Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Teachers in small districts are more likely to teach outside their area of certification than in large districts.

- The impact of an increasing population of "rural disadvantaged."

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

It's terribly expensive to offer such electives as fourth year foreign language, Calculus, Advanced Science, et cetera, when class sizes may be less than ten or even five. The problem extends to staff recruitment. Rural schools have generally not been able to provide competitive salaries and teachers prefer to teach in a school where they are required to make one or two class preparations rather than four or five.

Edward Huntington
District Superintendent
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

One of the problems in the small rural school is that we have all the needs, but we don't have all the experts.

George Mack
Superintendent of Schools
Walton Central School District
Delhi Hearing

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I am aware of teachers who have left rural areas because they grew up in urban neighborhoods and felt uncomfortable in rural surroundings.

Dr. George Mack
Superintendent of Schools
Walton Central School District
Delhi Hearing

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Given the scarce resources available to rural school districts, the relatively small number of handicapped children in some of these districts with the federal statutory rights that all handicapped children have to a free appropriate public education, rural school districts face a tremendous challenge. This challenge, if it is to be met, will require a more effective state

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (Cont'd.)

- This problem is often masked by the "idyllic" natural environment of rural communities;

- Children from broken homes are becoming the ones who are most difficult to educate in rural areas.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

response to the unique problems of rural school districts in addressing the rights and needs of the disabled.

Irene Platt
Commissioner
New York State Commission on
the Quality of Care for
the Mentally Disabled
Albany Hearing

I would suspect that the root cause of social problems in rural areas is economics. This subsequently is evidenced in alcohol abuse as well as abuse to family members, children, husbands, and wives. I take very seriously the role of the school in keeping their eyes open not only for those youngsters who are failing, but for those youngsters who might be falling between the cracks. The school should let students know if they are feeling very badly and believe there is no one they can turn to, that they can indeed come to a guidance counselor or teacher.

George Mack
Superintendent of Schools
Walton Central School District
Delhi Hearing

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I think the most serious problem in public education today is the disturbed child. Because of broken homes, because of parents that are both working or don't have the time or the interest to discipline their child or to love their child, we find kids that are confused and really not motivated to learn.

Edward Huntington
District Superintendent
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-
Essex BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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We just extended from three days a week to a full-time psychologist which the Board of Education believes was the correct thing to do. There is no question that filling out forms and following procedures and meeting requirements of the law has replaced services to kids. This is

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Per capita income has declined in real dollars:

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

a problem we do need expanded because we come in contact with a large number of students each day, and the schools, after the families, probably know the most about kids. If the taxpayers are willing to provide us the support services we need, I believe you will find the schools willing to undertake such responsibilities.

George Mack
Superintendent of Schools
Walton Central School District
Delhi Hearing

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Unless you have the back up of a parent or both parents, then a lot of what is done in school doesn't have a significant impact upon a child's life. In the absense of such support, it is extremely difficult for elementary and secondary schools to be effective in dealing with the problems and concerns of today's youth.

Reverend Paul Engel
Pastor
St. Mary's Church
Middleburgh, New York
Delhi Hearing

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For school aid, the 1980 State Board of Equalization and Assessment survey has not been used. It will first be used next year, the 1985-86 school year. We will use the 1980 information all the way to 1989-90 and this lag time becomes very critical to rural school districts. It has a very dramatic impact upon them. In essence what is happening is that over time, we are becoming increasingly out of date.

David Gaskell
Executive Director
New York State Division of
Equalization and Assessment
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Property values in rural counties have increased dramatically, and contributed to an overall ballooning in "paper wealth";

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We have found that rural school districts make more tax effort to provide education than do non-rural districts. In fact, this discrepancy between the rural and non-rural districts in New York State has been increasing over time. The rural districts are spending a larger percentage of their local income on education relative to the non-rural districts. It seems to me that a more reasonable explanation for the low expenditure levels that we observe in rural districts would place at least some emphasis on the low levels of income that exist in many rural districts.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse Hearing

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My 13-year-old son has gotten his schooling at the consolidated school in Indian Lake. His education is basic, the teachers are solid and conscientious, and his classes are small. However, there are no frills in this education and few challenges to it. Yet there are educational policymakers in Albany who categorize the school district as "rich", a statistical fact which cannot be disputed on paper but acquires a different meaning when you look at what is actually available, such as one foreign language, in the way of course work.

Craig Gilborn
Director
Adirondack Museum
Canton Hearing

A real concern to our area is falling land values. Property owners are asked to pay taxes out of today's economy, but the lag in the information from Equalization and Assessment makes them look like times are better than they are at the time the tax bill comes.

Kermit Huttar
Board of Education Member
Port Byron Central School
  District
Syracuse Hearing

There are so many discrepancies in determining what wealth is and whether it comes from income. The fact that we have a difficult time identifying what wealth there is through the income tax is caused by the privacy of the individual. Also some properties have sold for substantial sums of money. All of a sudden because something is coming into a neighborhood, it enhances the value of everybody else's property, but it doesn't change the potential for that person who may well be living on a fixed income.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

The economic difficulties experienced by the farmer also affects the school. As pointed out in the Commission report, the change in assessments has created paper wealth for rural areas and in no way does this reflect the actual economic problems of those involved in agriculture. The deteriorating condition of the farmer has tended to erode the traditional support that our agricultural community has shown for the public schools. If the current plight of the farmer continues, we can expect more budget defeats with a greater degree of frequency in the future.

Lawrence Kiley
Superintendent of Schools
Union Springs Central
  School District
Syracuse Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- This situation has led to serious financial problems for rural taxpayers as well as a backlash from a growing proportion of rural residents who are reluctant to pay school taxes because they do not have school-age children.

• Regardless of their size or sparsity, payable operating aid is making up a smaller fraction of rural school districts' approved educational expenditures.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I do wish that the wording on such facts dealing with increases in rural property values could be accompanied by an explanatory phrase or adjective to make clear that these paper values are beyond the control of the working men. They're also about as meaningful to him as a report on what is happening to the price of tickets to the Metropolitan Opera.

Charles Davis
Davis/McDonald Associates
Dryden, New York
Syracuse Hearing

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Supporting industrial expansion and tax relief for the elderly are two needed approaches in today's economy. However, the state needs to compensate these exemptions in order that they do not adversely affect the taxpayer or the tax base of the school system.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

Sloppy and outdated Equalization and Assessment practices have been a major focus of my attention for many years, and they remain a very real enemy of the value and quality of rural life.

Charles Davis
Davis/McDonald Associates
Dryden, New York
Syracuse Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Deteriorating facilities in rural schools, with a poor tax base to support rennovation. (This problem was cited to be common among urban and suburban schools as well).

- Lack of coordination and articulation among the range of vocational program offerings.
  - Competition/duplication of adult education services is prevalent;
  - "Pigeon-holing" of opportunities for vocational education students (e.g., many BOCES students in rural areas are unaware of the numerous opportunities for further technical training available at the post-secondary level).

- Insufficient data base of factors affecting education in rural areas.
  - Research is lacking on the inter-relationship of elements relative to education (e.g., enrollments, test scores, per capita income, etc.).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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When school districts prepare their budgets, they do so with the intention of getting the most out of each dollar in the instructional area. Consequently, the building is the last to have money spent on it. The common solution is to nail it together again, make it go another year. There is a very definite problem in this area.

William Deming
Executive Director
Rural Schools Program
Cornell University
Auburn Hearing

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Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Education must be re-established as a top priority in New York State, particularly in rural areas.

- Develop a consensus and on-going evaluation of the Regents Action Plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Secretary of State Gail S. Schaffer, in her testimony before the Commission, referred to rural New York as "our least known resource, our best kept secret". If the economic opportunities available in rural New York are to be nurtured, education needs to be established, not reestablished, as a top priority for our society in New York State. Otherwise, the best kept secret will become a forgotten memory. A good comprehensive education in rural New York breeds talented residents and work forces that should entice business to settle within the boundaries of New York State, particularly in rural areas.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

Working together with many concerned citizens from all walks of life will enable us to focus increasing attention on those who need it desperately, the students in small rural school districts.

Charles Davis
Davis/McDonald Associates
Dryden, New York
Syracuse Hearing

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At first glance, the Action Plan seems to be a collection of long awaited changes to a faltering system in need of revision. Indeed, many of those changes will probably do just that. But to the ever-watchful eye of the rural educator, it is a foreboding list of compliance requirements easily capable of putting some small rural schools out of business unless we work together and make a greater use of technology.

Charlotte Gregory
Superintendent of Schools
Schoharie Central School
District
Syracuse Hearing

The mere availability of academic courses is not sufficient to induce enrollments in the rural areas for whatever reason. The conclusion to draw, I think, is that the rural schools face need problems. The solutions to these problems

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Establish a blue-ribbon commission on "Financial and Resource Management Reorganization in Rural School Districts" in order to study consolidation and the role of BOCES in providing a comprehensive education:
  - Such a reorganization effort might eventually provide inducements for satellite and telecommunications. Thus, rural school districts, with limited access to resources, could provide innovative programming and networking, through a consortia of educational institutions and cultural entities;
  - Reorganization should strengthen the position of the elementary school as the focal point of community life;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

require a new partnership between the local and state level of the educational system and the challenge before us is to identify the details of that new partnership.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse Hearing

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Some of the alternatives other than reorganization that should be explored include:

The use of BOCES for shared teachers, classes and facilities beyond what we already have been doing.

Clustering of schools for certain purposes, such as offering advanced electives, sharing equipment, rooms, etc.

The use of technology to bring new and different learning opportunities to rural youth.

Cooperating with colleges and universities to provide expanded courses to high school youth.

Edward Huntington
District Superintendent
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-
Essex BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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We must ensure that the schools continue to reach out to all other groups in the community, industry, churches, and services so that we all work together to enrich our living conditions in one of the most beautiful areas in the world. The schools cannot succeed alone. We must do all that is possible to keep and attract industry and services.

George Mack
Superintendent of Schools
Walton Central School District
Delhi Hearing

The rural school is often the center of

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Reorganization should support the creation of "Centers for Learning Technology", so that schools can share a larger menu of services through greater interaction with one another;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

community life, and no outside force should determine its destiny. I support incentives to partial and total reorganization. I oppose mandates.

Edward Huntington
District Superintendent
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-
Essex BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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As a Rural Schools Program, we need to pess legislation for incentive aid to reorganize ourselves through technology. We need to stress cooperative efforts with state agencies as well as seek innovative methods of meeting these challenges which will face us in the new electronic age.

Charlotte Gregory
Superintendent of Schools
Schoharie Central School
District
Syracuse Hearing

Technology and communications may also provide the vehicle for school districts to pursue in-depth programs and pooling of services. Districts should explore the electronic sharing of small enrollment, but necessary in-depth, course offerings. This kind of sharing should qualify for adequate incentive aid under newly defined school legislation which would expand the options for the sharing and combining of services to those districts.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

The utilization of technology on a cooperative basis cannot be over-emphasized. The isolation and limited course offerings experienced by most rural school students can be best, if not only, overcome through the use of advanced technology in a cooperative setting. Interactive telecommunication, enabling several individual and/or several small groups of students in a large geographic region to have access to the talents of an extremely competent instructor utilizing the finest teaching aids, looms as a

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

real possibility for rural school districts. Technology in a cooperative mode is the only logical method to open the world to students in isolated school districts in a manner which is both cost-efficient and program-effective.

Ronald Poletto
District Superintendent
Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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- A system for faculty and administrative in-service training and intensive supervisory follow-up is critical.

In today's world of geometrically ever-increasing technology, it is difficult for instructors to remain current in their knowledge and thinking. In addition, many instructors in small rural school districts are the sole provider of instruction in their subject area. These facts, when taken in conjunction with the remoteness of many rural school districts, make it difficult for individual staff members to share information, increase their subject matter knowledge, and improve their methodology. In-service on a cooperative basis among school districts utilizing the latest technology is a must.

Ronald Poletto
District Superintendent
Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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- Establish satellite institutions to enhance regional cooperation and small business management.

I'm somewhat doubtful about the need for satellite institutions to enhance regional cooperation in small business management. I cannot really see what is intended beyond what BOCES can already do.

Edward Huntington
District Superintendent
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-
Essex BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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We suggest a change of the system of educational finance which now relies primarily on property values and contains limited flexibility for a variety of schools in New York State. Factors

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Address the need for additional state and financial resources to achieve the educational opportunity specified in all goals. The acquisition of these funds is based on the need to stress personal income (as opposed to real property assessment) as an important distribution factor in devising educational formulas.

- Establish financial and instructional equality among all school districts in New York State regarding funding and staffing.

  - Rural school districts should receive state aid which would enable them to develop and maintain bilingual foreign language requirements equal to their urban counterparts;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

such as the true impact of enrollment decline, geographic sparsity, the effects of increasing tax exemptions, and education for the handicapped should be considered in an attempt to equalize state support for rural schools.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

As far as categorical aid to rural school districts is concerned, I think the state has got to follow the leadership of the federal government. Under President Reagan, they have combined many of these categorical programs into block grant programs. School districts can use the money based on their assessment of need, and not for what someone has advised in Washington D.C. or Albany as they see it.

Charles Smith
Superintendent of Schools
Andes, New York
Delhi Hearing

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Assessment practices in rural areas need to be comprehensively reviewed by the State. Ballooning property values in many rural New York areas are not an indication of the ability of the residents to pay taxes.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

With respect to the social nature of the school, education of the handicapped has been the most significantly increased cost factor to the local schools. In small districts, the movement in of two or three families with handicapped youngsters creates a severe, unanticipated financial impact on the small rural districts. Monies are not recouped until the following school year, and then only on a partial basis. Aid should be provided in the current fiscal year for handicap educational costs.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Rural districts in our area are receiving numerous grievances from utilities, corporations, and businesses requesting reduced property assessments. Steps should be taken to alleviate any severe impact on communities due to these reduced property assessments.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

It's our judgement that the whole notion of timeliness and currency in setting equalization rates ought to be seriously looked at. There ought to be a dialogue on the issue. Our lack of timing is clearly to the detriment of rural areas.

David Gaskell
Executive Director
New York State Division of
Equalization and Assessment
Albany Hearing

We need the opportunity to be more innovative. Innovation needs to be supported by new financing structures and we suggest that the incentive aid be expanded to facilitate a reorganization of resources as well as the physical reorganization of school districts.

Charlotte Gregory
Superintendent of Schools
Schoharie Central School
District
Syracuse Hearing

Rural school districts need the legislative and financial support from the state to provide more in-depth programs with other types of sharing of resources. For example, a regional high school with local elementary schools retained in each community may be a solution for some rural districts. For others, open enrollment plus a pattern of retaining K through 12 grades with one of the schools specializing in 7 to 12 science while another specializes in 7 to 12

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	language arts may be a viable option. This rural magnet school concept could provide extensive educational opportunities for students in rural New York while also being cost-effective. Robert McCarthy Superintendent of Schools Geneseo School District Syracuse Hearing ********
- Local tax effort should include utility and sales taxes as an equitable requirement in the formulation of HURD aid;	The financing of schools with a state mandated tax or mandated sharing of sales revenues and the state aid based upon accounting of general wealth would provide greater equalization of both the revenue raising abilities and the expenditures of school districts than does the present law and formulas. Robert McCarthy Superintendent of Schools Geneseo School District Syracuse Hearing ********
- The state should recognize the infeasibility of consolidating some school districts. "Necessarily small rural school districts" should be an important subset in formula development.	Rural school consolidation/centralization needs to be redefined in terms of school district service pooling. The redefinition also needs to include financial support beyond the operating aid formula without limitations, the limitations in the building aid factors. With such a broad range of consolidation and sharing choices, rural schools will be able to offer the opportunities necessary for their students in a cost-effective manner without jeopardizing local school control or the local school identity. Robert McCarthy Superintendent of Schools Geneseo School District Syracuse Hearing ********
• Provide a reduced regulatory framework so that schools have more flexibility in the utilization of the financial resources available to them.	Rural variables make it impossible to fit school districts into neat categories, let alone an overall pattern with large city and suburban districts. Laws and regulations need to be designed not for the average district, but with flexibility to best serve all types of districts. Currently, rural districts have the

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Increase the percentage of high school students who enroll in academic subjects such as Regents Science, Mathematics, Foreign Languages, etc.:
    - Increase the test score performance of students enrolled in these courses;
    - Provide the opportunity for BOCES students to enroll in academic (Regents) courses at BOCES Centers.
- Decrease the turnover rate among rural administrators, faculty, and Board of Education members.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

greatest difficulty fitting this average pattern.

Kermit Huttar
Board of Education Member
Port Byron Central School
District
Syracuse Hearing

It's the school that is the heart of the social and cultural center for rural communities. I think the time is ripe for us to develop programs that are more in tune with the needs of rural areas.

Craig Gilborn
Director
Adirondack Museum
Canton Hearing

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Anything that provides more in-service to teachers is a step in the right direction. There is a point, where if the teachers don't get their batteries recharged and perceptions sharpened once again, they lose the edge which is vital to the instructional process.

George Mack
Superintendent of Schools
Walton Central School
District
Delhi Hearing

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We've got to find ways to provide a strong viable program in rural schools to entice people to want to live and work in a particular area. In order to do that, we've got to pay them an adequate salary.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

In the past, we have tried to make grants available to school districts with problems. Sometimes it's only $10,000 for some printing and summer curriculum work or a little staff retraining. What really happens is that there's a reordering on the part of the management of a particular school district towards getting

- Expand training opportunities for those people who have not adequately prepared themselves for current and future job markets.

achievement from their teachers in driving home the basic skills and methodologies that have been successful in other places. We believe we're on to something very substantial in the way of leadership investment that is as important as any kind of money investment.

Robert J. Maurer
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York State Education
Department
Albany Hearing

It's just not possible to develop any type of continuity. Students suffer the most because of such rapid turnover of faculty and staff and the resulting lack of proper direction. Rural administrators and teachers must increasingly be viewed as resources worthy of decent pay and needed support so they can afford to remain in rural areas. Although many would prefer to remain in rural school districts, they feel they have to get ahead by making a move for the sake of their families and their own retirement benefits.

Charles Davis
Davis/McDonald Associates
Dryden, New York
Syracuse Hearing

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I fully concur with the need to educate our youth, rural and urban alike, on the importance of the activities of the 3 percent of our population engaged in agriculture. It is essential that we cooperate in educating our youth on the importance of agriculture, because we all have an interest in food and our continued availability to supply our food needs. We must also open our youth to the employment possibilities offered in agriculture and its supporting service sector.

Kim Blot
Director of Rural Affairs
New York State Department of
Agriculture and Markets
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Lengthen approval for services at BOCES institutions to a five-year period.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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The recent enactment of legislation to authorize BOCES to provide academic and summer programs and services will especially benefit our more sparsely settled areas. Indeed, I note that your Commission report called for that extension of power and authority on the parts of BOCES.

Robert J. Maurer
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York State Education
Department
Albany Hearing

New York State has a functioning immediate support organization in the BOCES network. Currently, shared BICES services are approved on a year-to-year basis. The BOCES medium is generally accepted as a "good idea", even by the most conservative communities. Extending state approval of shared services to five years may provide the motivation for further innovative programming and networking among rural schools. BOCES does provide the potential for consolidated sharing, especially in light of recent technological advances.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

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In this welcome period of education reform, one of the most critical challenges our schools face is the recruitment and retention of teachers. None of the important improvements in curriculum and standards will make any difference if we don't see to it that we have an adequate supply of to-notch teachers in the classroom.

Thomas Y. Hobart, Jr.
President
New York State United Teachers
(quoted in) "The Matter of Paying
Teachers"
Middletown Times Herald Record
May 9, 1984

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Support "Summer Immersion Institutes." ✓
  - Such institutes would enable all students in the state (preferably a mix of urban and rural residents) to have access to an innovative educational experience;
  - Concurrent programs in teacher training could be established at these institutes.
- If a certain percentage of a particular year's state budget goes toward funding K-12 education in a rural school district, then that percentage should be maintained in the following year's state budget. This would be more justifiable than simply taking the sum allocated in one year's budget and adding a set amount to it in order to create the following year's state appropriation to K-12 education in a particular rural district.

Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can a degree of flexibility be incorporated into educational performance standards, in the event that they conflict with vocational career paths?
    - For example, vocational (BOCES) students are oftentimes enrolled in advanced math, but do not have the time to fulfill foreign language requirements;
    - Individual students should be encouraged to choose a career path, instead of choosing between vocational or college preparation.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

As you look at the Regents Action Plan and problems facing small rural school districts, you will find that the youngster who, at certain times in the past might have opted for the BOCES program in licensed practical nursing with the full intention of going on to a community college nursing program, will have limited opportunity to move into the BOCES experience. I would suggest that you continue to discuss that very question of flexibility.

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

As New York State deals with and plans for the future of education, the primary role of the school needs to be identified mutually by the legislative structure and educational leaders. It may well be that schools cannot be and do all for all, while also remaining academic institutions which by their nature will provide groups of students with various levels of academic skill.

Robert McCarthy
Superintendent of Schools
Geneseo School District
Syracuse Hearing

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One of the things our young people are going to have to be able to react to is the demand to change career paths a number of times as they grow up. Yet, we still have youngsters talking to us about an LPN and an RN program who say, "When I'm through, I'll get a job and be fine for the rest of my life."

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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Somehow a commitment has to be made to rural schools about their very survival. I'm not sure

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How should the two types of consolidation/centralization be distinguished in the discussion of these educational policy issues: 1) school district service pooling or BOCES academic services (functional); and 2) school district (physical)?

- Is it desirable to offer vocational and technical training to students before they have mastered basic competencies in mathematics, science, verbal and written communications, and computer literacy?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

the answer for them is wholesale consolidation. If we take a look at consolidation and how it might jeopardize the ruralness of our areas, I think that most of our rural schools can survive, given certain circumstances that will alow them to do so.

Charles Struble
Educator
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Olean Hearing

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We ought to continue to suggest basic competency. We also should recognize that some youngsters as they come through the grades, do not comprehend all that they should for many, many reasons. I would suggest that sometimes basic competencies can be reinforced. Remedial programs can be developed in concert with vocational. I have seen very fine vocational and occupational teachers reemphasize mathematic skills through their courses. A good teacher does it all the time.

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

Rural youth are inclined to be pragmatic and to seek relevance in their studies. It's hard to motivate these young people from the rural areas to take college prepatory subjects. They tend to prefer vocational courses and are less attracted to basic courses such as science, math, and english. Such preferences should be recognized, and the school schedules should be arranged to permit their enrollment in vocational subjects while taking the basic courses needed for college admission. I object to high school tracking systems that permit students to opt for a vocational track that does not include the basic courses needed for further study. There needs to be a compromise that permits vocational courses for those so desiring, while also requiring a core of basic courses needed for college admission.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- Some rural school districts are contracting in enrollment size while others are experiencing substantial increases due to population changes. How can state funding formulas be made more responsive to the special needs experienced by both types of school districts?

- How can "necessarily small rural school districts" be supported in their efforts to offer quality education on par with their larger urban and rural counterparts?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

One of the most positive aspects of vocational training is motivation. Hundreds of young men and women in BOCES programs have found a renewed interest in basic study because of the excitement of Vo-Tech training. There seems to be a feeling that permeates many of the national reports that all students are receptive to attaining competencies in the academic areas. This is simply not the case. Many young people are turned off by academic studies and will drop out if not turned on by something.

Edward Huntington
District Superintendent
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

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Certainly the general public, our taxpayers, has difficulty accepting increased costs in light of declining enrollments in our schools. As often happens, they use the facts to fit their viewpoint and make it sound like the cost of education should go down with every single student that is lost. Our efforts as board members and administrators to effectively explain this apparent contradiction often appears self-serving.

Kermit Huttar
Board of Education Member
Port Byron Central School
District
Syracuse Hearing

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Necessarily small rural school districts should continue to be encouraged to use a BOCES vehicle or to cooperate with other school districts in order to offer quality education.

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

We need to find a means of diversion between necessarily small school districts that are

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can technology, such as telecommunications, be put to greater use serving students in sparsely settled rural school districts?

- In existing public policy, urban areas have built-in safeguards and clout. Is there a need to identify "rural disadvantaged areas" in order to create new, more responsive funding mechanisms?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

small out of necessity as opposed to those districts that are small out of choice. Both categories of small districts face similar problems. They both face higher costs. Yet, in my view, those districts that are small out of necessity are more entitled to state financial support than are those that are small out of choice.

David Monk
Assistant Professor for
Educational Administration
Cornell University
Syracuse Hearing

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What I caution you against, as you look at rural school districts, is the assumption that just because the trend is there and rural school districts are moving quickly in the area of technology and telecommunication, are rural school districts going to be able to develop networks through BOCES or in some other manner? Are they going to be able to put up the dollars in the first place without significant assistance from the state?

Robert Loretan
District Superintendent
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES
Syracuse Hearing

At the risk of seeming anti-technology, I really must voice concerns for the potential of over-computerization in rural schools. While computers are certainly a wonderful tool for efficient management, we must be cautious that computers continue to serve our needs and that we not serve the computers. Consolidation of school districts, without sufficient human input, must be avoided in all possible situations. Under such a scenario, I could envision heavily computerized regional schools completely destroying the many positive assets inherent in the nature of rural school districts.

Kermit Huttar
Board of Education Member
Port Byron Central School
District
Syracuse Hearing

Where Rural New York Is Today: Higher Education

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends and Assumptions

- According to the New York State Board of Regents, college and university enrollment in New York State could drop by 110,000 students by 1983 and 1992 because of a shrinking population of young people. The number of high school graduates in the state could decline by 30 percent in the decade between 1981 and 1991, thereby causing enrollments to fall. The strains of rapid expansion of higher education followed by recent years of constricting resources and leveling enrollments are taking their toll.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Rural youth frequently exhibit limited aspirations. As they mature and become exposed to alternative opportunities, they gain self-confidence and their aspirations grow. This has been particularly evident as such students enroll in a two-year technical curriculum, do well, and decide to transfer to baccalaureate degree programs. It has also been an outcome of Prep and EOP programs where students whose high school records would not qualify them to admission to college, have taken remedial work, blossomed, and excelled.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

Several factors contribute to lower incidences of college-going youth who have been educated in rural school districts. Among these are family tradition, community attitudes, and self-perception. In addition, the proximity of a college, the cost of attendance, and the choice of curriculum offerings are important factors that have to be taken into consideration.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College

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According to the State Education Department, the per capita rate for high school graduates continuing on to some other form of post secondary education is much higher in urban areas than in rural counties. Some 73 percent of the high school graduates from urban counties go on to four- and two-year colleges and to various trade and technical schools. Just under 60 percent of the graduates from rural counties pursue further education.

There are a number of factors at play here. One is the lifestyle associated with more remote sections of New York State. Many rural families historically at the low end of the economic

- Enrollment of "traditional students" (18-21 age group) in many higher education institutions in rural areas is projected to decline sharply during the next decade or more.

- Business and industry are becoming more sophisticated and require workers to have additional vocational education and retraining at the post-secondary level.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

scale are struggling even more today with the rising cost of living. They can't afford to stop working to go to school. Young people who grow up in that environment see few options other than to accept that way of life for themselves.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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The broader picture of education relates to the concept of human investment. In the State University of New York, the state share of the investment in public institutions has consistently been lowered over the past several years. We have been increasingly moving from a publicly-supported to a publicly-assisted concept of education. That is, we have gone from about 80 percent funding to a point where we are currently about 64 state funded. This means that fewer and fewer young and older people will have access to the services of a public university.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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We are finding in the engineering technologies that we cannot adequately meet the needs of industry in a two-year program. They say they want four-year degree graduates. We are just not able to provide the skills at the Agricultural and Technical College level because of the explosion of technology.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Not only does the presence of high quality universities serve as a significant force in attracting high technology industry, but the universities themselves serve as a source from which new industries may evolve. A cooperative atmosphere between the state's universities and industries will be a necessary precondition for future economic development.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There are so many adults that are going back to school and retraining themselves. It's amazing.

Maureen Curry
Director
Olean Public Library
Olean Hearing

The local community college recognizes its responsibilities to try to orient its programs to better serve the needs of the industries in the area that are dependent on more trained workers. There is a branch campus that offers courses on the chemistry of paper-making so that people employed at a local paper mill can receive specific instruction in order to upgrade their skills.

William Johnston
Planner
Essex County Planning
Department
Troy Hearing

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We have seen a perfect marriage between industrial development and rural areas if one considers the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's Center for Industrial Innovation. Here, you have approximately 700 acres of rural farm land currently being put to a different use through the introduction of RPI's high technology park. RPI has built this facility properly. They have worked closely with Rensselaer County officials and developed the necessary infrastructure before deciding to simply move ahead and randomly locate industry there. The result has been that they constructed the necessary support structures, in terms of roads, sewers, and water did not disrupt what was essentially a bucolic situation. They have maintained the rural atmosphere of that particular park and matched it with the needs of high technology.

William Murphy
County Executive
Rensselaer County
Troy Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- Electronic linkages (e.g., media and telecommunications) will be increasingly important in affording individuals in rural areas the opportunity and convenience to pursue higher education.

- According to a study by The Battelle Corporation, the success of high technology parks is heavily dependent upon the availability and proximity of quality colleges and universities and existing high technology industry and research facilities.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Information available through telecommunications is of particular importance in rural communities because distance and difficulties of mobility, particularly during the winter months, required decentralized alternatives. The computer and electronic communications provide a ready and useful tool both for access to essential information and as an alternative to the classroom.

Jerome Komisar
Provost
State University of New
York Central Administration
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- Higher education contributes to statewide job opportunities by inducing business and industry to remain within the state.

- The State University of New York is the largest and most diverse public multi-campus university system in the world. Of its 64 campuses, 36 are located in rural counties.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Education is essential to overcome the problems of unemployment. A pool of skilled manpower and a good educational system are ingredients that are essential to attract industry and to foster local industrial growth. Education and marketable skills are also the essential difference between the employed and the unemployed.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

The magnificent network of outstanding colleges and universities found in rural New York is such a clearly identifiable resource. Working with these institutions and using their expertise and facilities in conjunction with private business concerns can generate significant employment opportunities in the high tech industry, an industry that will locate in areas in which a constant pool of talent and skilled labor is readily available.

Gail Schaffer
Secretary of State
New York State
Department of State
Albany Hearing

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Many of the State University of New York's campuses are found in rural settings. The faculty and staff that serve these institutions prize the values of rural life and welcome the opportunity for community service.

Jerome Komisar
Provost
State University of New York
Central Administration
Albany Hearing

New York State's network of colleges and universities is rich in its geographic and academic diversity. It is able to devote its

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- A sizable proportion of State University Agricultural and Technical College students who seek employment upon graduation are successful in their efforts. The remainder of these graduates go on to the baccalaureate level.

- Generally, vocational and community college education, as well as adult re-training are available and accessible to most rural residents, many of whom would not ordinarily pursue higher education. In addition, many community college students eventually pursue baccalaureate education. The average age of the community college student is between 25 and 27 years old. This implies that many students served by these institutions are already employed and seek in-service training.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

impressive talents and resources to building a robust present and future throughout New York State.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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Our SUNY campuses represent an underutilized resource for correcting the perception that rural areas lack the aesthetic and cultural opportunities required to make living in such areas attractive to professional and managerial staff. Many of the campuses are located in rural communities and provide cultural activities comparable to those found in metropolitan and suburban areas. Faculty and staff offer a recognizable expertise that is available for technical consultation, an important asset in attracting business and industry to rural areas. In addition, the colleges provide an invaluable educational resource for employee skill enhancement.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

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Community Colleges continue to see a trend toward part-time enrollment. This is attributed to an improved job market which has attracted more local residents to work full-time while attending college part-time.

Carl Milhm
Director of Admissions
Ulster County Community College
(quoted in) "Part-time Enrollment
Thrives at UCCC"
The Middletown Times Herald Record
August 21, 1984

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Strengths (cont'd.)	Mothers with grown children, students with bachelor's degrees, nurses, high school students, and senior citizens, along with "typical" college students are mingling on community college campuses these days. Working with industry as a partner, particularly in connection with federal programs involving retraining of workers, will help community colleges maintain their marketability and popularity. These schools must continue to tailor their programs to the needs of the individual communities in which they serve. "State Community Colleges Bulging at Seams" The Middletown Times Herald Record September 10, 1983
• Higher education has made a significant contribution to quality health care systems in rural New York.	The quality of health care, the delivery of services to needy people, and the enrichment of local schools and governments are all enhanced by SUNY's presence in rural New York. Jerome Komisar Provost State University of New York Central Administration Albany Hearing
• Socioeconomic and educational utility of the land-grant colleges at Cornell in adapting to the complexity and diversity of rural New York's institutions and economy. This includes a unique system of Cooperative Extension Services made available through a strong network of County Extension Agents and Offices.	The Cooperative Extension Service is a timely and cost-effective delivery system already in existence which helps our people to interpret, evaluate, and apply results of research and other information they need. Through our community resource development programming efforts, we see the need to help rural consumers help themselves by making new and existing information more readily accessible. Laurel Krubin Colorado State University "Joint Congressional Hearing on the Changing Needs of Rural America July 21, 1982

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The "Centers for Advanced Technology" program will stimulate public-university-industry partnerships and increase the potential for high technology research and development in rural New York.

- The independent sector of higher education in New York State, comprised of over 100 campuses offering a variety of disciplines and programs, is the largest in the nation. Twenty-eight of these institutions are located in rural counties throughout New York State.

  - Independent sector campuses enroll over 20,000 residents of rural counties.

  - The conservative economic impact of colleges and universities located in rural counties, exceeds $2 billion annually, minus all federal and state appropriations made to these campuses.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Many of our college campuses have recently created development centers for business. It is the expressed intent of these development centers for business to contribute to the economic development and enrichment of our rural areas.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Poor career guidance at elementary and secondary levels has serious implications for higher education.

- Poor curriculum coordination between educational, business-related and governmental programs at all institutional levels.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Young people today come to college with a lot of assets, but they also come with a good deal of liabilities. They live in a very tumultuous world. I think there has been a significant breakdown in family life, and that reflects in the problems that young people bring to the campuses. There has been an increase in alcoholism. I think alcoholism and drugs are about equal now in terms of being a very negative influence in our society. Students certainly do not leave their problems at home as they move up to the campus on the day they register.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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We have tried to move college courses out to the population, offering a certain number of courses in various parts of the county. Yet, that just touches on the problem and really doesn't solve the major difficulty of accessibility.

John Walter
President
Sullivan County Community College
Monticello Hearing

One problem that our Private Industry Council continually identifies is the difficulty of deciding what to train workers for. If you are in an urban area with relatively high employment growth rates, you can take some chances and train people for future growth. But in an area in which there is a very slow growth in employment, workers are frequently being trained under the assumption that they are going to have to leave the county in order to find a job in the area in which they have been trained. This disturbs the Council very much. Yet, in the end, to do anything less than prepare an

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	individual to take a job outside the county would be depriving individuals within the county of an opportunity to seek gainful employment. Edmund Russell Economic Development and Administrative Director St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency
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• Within public institutions, the inflexibility of the state system relative to auditing and financial management.	New York imposes more restrictions on the expenditures of appropriated funds than almost any other state in the union. The result is not greater cost-effectiveness, but rather an adherence to administrative processes that tend to erode managerial creativity and that fail to take into consideration essential differences in local settings and specific institutional needs. Greater autonomy and flexibility in fund expenditure would permit SUNY campuses to be far more responsive to students and communities while still providing ample safeguards that tax dollars are being expended strictly in the public interest. Jerome Komisar Provost State University of New York Central Administration Albany Hearing
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• Although part-time teachers are cost effective, over-reliance on their services diminishes loyalty as well as an institution's reputation for excellence.	One of the greatest drawbacks within the university is the fact that in certain technical areas, we are competing with business and industry for faculty, where the salaries are far greater than we can offer an individual, based on the credentials we insist an individual must have. While there are trade-offs in terms of the advantages of college life that simply don't exist in the private sector it is no longer possible for young people to make this type of trade-off. We are experiencing similar problems with administrators as well. Seldon Kruger President Delhi Agricultural and Technical College Delhi Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Rural New York has "invested" heavily in the students it has educated, but out-migration often suggests this has not always been a reciprocal arrangement.
    - Out-migration is frequently fueled because the financial needs of many college-bound students in New York State cannot be adequately met by existing federal and state student aid packages.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

When the teaching profession becomes less attractive to our best and brightest students, we are compromising the future of higher learning in America. Many of our current faculty members feel "stuck;" they have lost the traditional mobility and vision of career that motivated so many professors to strive for excellence.

"Involvement in Learning:
Realizing the Potential of
American Higher Education"
October, 1984

Many of the institutions of higher education in rural areas have been providing an eminently well-qualified workforce. The major regret that I have concerns the fact that very few of these people are able to remain in rural areas. We suffer from a brain drain, much the way most underdeveloped areas in the world suffer.

James King
Director
Technical Assistance Center
State University of New York
at Plattsburgh
Canton Hearing

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Lower and middle income rural families are adversely affected by the limited availability of financial aid, and I'm talking about people who are earning between $20,000 and $30,000. They are virtually excluded from any type of tuition assistance. These families find themselves very hard-pressed, especially since they are paying very high income taxes. Many of them attend two-year colleges and then transfer to four-year programs. In addition they have to borrow to the hilt. By the time they get out of college, they are under such a heavy financial burden that many of them are discouraged from getting into a teaching profession.

Charles Smith
Superintendent of Schools
Andes, New York
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- There is uncertainty as to where future vocational education should take place - at the BOCES, community college, or Agricultural and Technical level, or a combination of all three;
    - It has become increasingly difficult to distinguish between the academic programs and clientele of the Agricultural and Technical Colleges and the community colleges;
    - Vocational education facilities are sometimes duplicative and costly in their programs;
    - Reduced access to educational re-training, particularly because of high costs for adults at BOCES institutions;
    - Reluctance of taxpayers to support skills training that could otherwise be acquired on-the-job at the expense of others.
- Increased reticence among rural counties to contribute their portion of funds to finance community college education.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- The present system of comprehensive annual budget preparation and documentation is very cumbersome for state-operated colleges and universities.

- Linkages between rural counties' financial contributions to community college education and economic development have been attempted, but the results have not been satisfactory.

Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Education must be re-established as a top priority in New York State, particularly in rural areas.

- Higher education should be accessible to all rural residents. Everyone who wishes to pursue advanced study or continuing education should have the opportunity to do so:
  - Address problems with student aid and loans, particularly in the case of financial assistance for part-time students;
  - Re-evaluate the criteria for determining loan waivers in accordance with emerging societal needs in rural areas;
  - Emphasize the original parity purpose of the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).

- Provide SUNY campuses with greater management and fiscal autonomy.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The Education Committee Report stresses, "Education must be reestablished as a top priority in New York State, particularly in rural areas." It was the strong opinion of the task committee that a firm committment to a quality system of education for our citizens is basic to all other recommendations. It was our collective judgment that other problem areas had diverted attention away from educational needs.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

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Rurally located campuses, such as the agricultural and technical colleges, should be provided with the resources needed to develop a more flexible and comprehensive part-time program for adults. These programs should include career counseling, financial aid, support services such as child care, credit for past experience and academic relevance to actual and developing employment opportunities in New York State.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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We as educators are concerned with the quality of life in rural areas, not only because our institutions are located in them, but because we live in them. Unfortunately, our campuses are underutilized in this particular regard. It is our hope, particularly with respect to rural campuses of the State University system, that we will be given the authority, flexibility, and freedom for discretionary judgment to do what we know should be done.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Strengthen the partnership and contact between government-supported higher education and the private sector in order to provide skills and training:

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Meeting the information needs of rural America requires a new partnership between education and telecommunications. This new partnership requires a more thorough merging of the interests of telecommunications providers and educational institutions. Videotex and other new computer-based information technolgoies will change the role of librarians, the role of teachers, and the nature of institutionalized education.

William R. Oates
School of Communications
University of Alabama

In rural counties it is virtually impossible to maintain a current and comprehensive technical library. Accordingly, the Commission should consider a policy of assisting rural counties with technical support by using improved access methods to technical references. Educational institutions, such as the community colleges, can and do play a significant role in community development. In many ways, these local educational institutions are integrated with local business and governmental bodies.

Delmar C. Palm
Majority Leader
Cortland County Legislature
Auburn Hearing

Skilled workers are the key to higher productivity and a greater ability to compete in world markets. Quality education for all students is essential and we can only succeed if we establish new partnerships between our business and educational communities. If business wants its needs met, it is going to have to meet the needs of the schools. Several ways to accomplish this objective include:

- Companies in construction-related fields can help school buildings in need of repair and renovation.
- Book stores can set up reading courses and help with tutoring programs.
- Banks and accounting firms can offer financial advice to school districts.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	• Printing companies, advertising agencies, and public relations firms can help produce student handbooks and curriculum materials. • High-tech firms can help train teachers and students to use new technology. Governor Pierre du Pont State of Delaware Plattsburgh Press-Republican June 18,1984 ********
- Encourage "remote distance learning" and establish satellite institutions in off-campus locations for regional cooperation and small business enhancement.	We attempt to do as much off campus in outlying centers as we possibly can. We are not going to attract new industry, the kind of light and technical industry that we want, unless we can demonstrate to a progressive and responsible industry that we are able to provide critical manpower training. I would hope that the first point of departure would be to train the rural natives and provide occupational alternatives and employment opportunities for them as opposed to bringing in waves of new people. Seldon Kruger President Delhi Agricultural and Technical College Delhi Hearing ********
- Tap the resources of the Job Training Partnership Program's Private Industry Councils in order to provide educational outreach services and skills re-training in rural areas.	The rural school tends to be the focal point of communitya activity. I would like to see us put additional resources into an expanded adult education program. The move into a high tech post-industrial society is creating serious retraining needs. The local public school can and should have a role in this retraining program in conjunction with neighboring colleges and universities. Lawrence Kiley Superintendent of Schools Union Springs Central School District Syracuse Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Expand opportunities for students who seek baccalaureate degrees in the applied technologies.

- Increase curriculum articulation among BOCES, community colleges, Agricultural and Technical Colleges, State Colleges and Universities, and private institutions in order to develop a viable and sequential program for quality vocational education in rural areas:

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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We are sending from New York State considerable numbers of community college graduates to programs in other states simply because of the lack of availability of these program at the upper divisional level.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

Our state system lacks programs and capacities for those who decide to transfer after having completed a two-year degree program in the technologies. Both community and agricultural and technical colleges offer a variety of AAS degree curriculums that prepare students for jobs. However, only about 25 percent of the graduates from such programs transfer into baccalaureate degree programs. A much higher percentage would continue if the opportunity was readily available.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

The type of program that best suits the AAS Degree is one that leads to a Bachelor of Technology Degree. There are relatively few programs of this sort within New York State, and I advocate that there be more of them. Rural youth are attracted to applied technology programs, and it is common for those enrolled in AAS Degree programs to revise their aspirations to seek study beyond that degree.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

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It is important to build a closer alliance between secondary and post-secondary institutions in rural areas. Greater exposure to

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

  - The institutional missions of the Agricultural and Technical Colleges need to be reassessed in light of the evolution of BOCES education in rural New York;
  - There are layers of vocational education. As industrial advances are made, preparation is needed beyond the BOCES level;
  - Vocational education should follow a sequence of events in order to avoid duplication and unnecessary costs.

- Address the need for "Professional Development Centers for Public Two- Year Colleges" in order to train administrative personnel and faculty.
- Establish a multi-year budget plan for state-supported higher education institutions.
- Address salary inequities between similar positions in SUNY units.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

higher education would alleviate the fear of the unknown, making continued study more palatable for some students. Although this stronger linkage can be initiated by the educators themselves at all levels, support for the articulation process must also come from state government.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

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Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can responsive and equitable opportunities in higher education best be provided in rural New York?
  - What factors most seriously hinder rural colleges' and universities' institutional responsiveness, creativity, and initiative?
- How can required flexibility, resources, and articulation best be provided secondary and post-secondary institutions so that they can adapt to and be supportive of new societal, economic, and technological changes?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Our educational system must do everything possible to provide the knowledge and skills needed for continued study. It is critically important that students receive a good foundation in mathematics, science, and verbal skills while in high school. However, we must retain alternative routes for those who don't prepare themselves adequately. Thus, there needs to be provisions for remedial courses for college preparatory study for those who become motivated at a later age.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
Technical College
Olean Hearing

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It is important for college campuses to offer an academic mix that is fine tuned to the varied employment opportunties in New York State. Responsive education comes at a price, however. Specialized instruction and constant updating requires support in terms of resources, finance, and administrative flexibility.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
Technical College
Delhi Hearing

I think there must be far greater discretion in terms of our ability to make judgments, act on those judgments, and then be held accountable for them. A problem in September 1984 should not have its resolution in September of 1986. We must be able to act and meet a need in a reasonable length of time. It took 16 years to establish a two-year nursing program on our campus. From the point of view of the institution, it was not economically feasible, but from the point of view of the region in which we are located, it was a medical necessity. The smaller hospitals in this area were having increasing difficulty providing competent technical personnel, and because of state resistance, we were unable to serve a very important need. I would submit that this type of gap in time is simply not acceptable in

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	attempting to make a public institution respond to a crying public need. Seldon Kruger President Delhi Agricultural and Technical College Delhi Hearing ********
	The most important objective of education is that one learn to become self-educating. Dr. Douglas H. Heath Professor Emeritus Haverford College (quoted in) Watertown Daily Times October 12, 1984 ********
• How does higher education contribute to rural development and the quality of rural life?	Education of our rural citizens can contribute to the solutions in nearly all areas of concern as identified for the Commission's attention. Improved health care, economic development, protection of our environment, et cetera, all require people with the ability to understand and to think. It is through education that we will achieve such ability, and it requires a process of education to create a sense of awareness and concern. David Huntington President Alfred Agricultural and Technical College Olean Hearing
- Specifically, what can higher education do to stimulate economic and employment growth? How can it benefit quality health care systems?	A logical and economical way to serve the need for Bachelor of Technology Degree programs is to authorize the Agricultural and Technical Colleges to expand their present missions to include upper division programs in the technologies. They are residential colleges and already have the physical facilities essential to such a role. Further, they have an invaluable resource of highly skilled

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

  - How can the mission orientations of rural New York's post-secondary institutions be re-evaluated with regard to the potential impact of education on the delivery of social services in rural areas?

- How can public policy address the need for increased access to educational opportunities at the local level? Current policy emphasizes regional access, often to the exclusion and detriment of local needs.

- How will the increased competition for students due to sharp declines in the traditional 18-21 college-age cohort affect the quality, responsiveness, and cost of post-secondary education during the next two decades? Does the current system have the tools and concepts required to manage and adapt itself in an extended period of restructuring?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

and specialized faculty that presents a foundation for the building of such programs.

David Huntington
President
Alfred Agricultural and
  Technical College
Olean Hearing

Twenty years ago colleges did not see themselves as advocates of economic development. They didn't see themselves as part of an organization with a public service mission. Two-year colleges initially began exclusively as agricultural colleges. No one argued that they should not evolve into multi-purpose or comprehensive institutions. I would see this as part of a logical and evolutionary progression maintaining a two-year thrust. But where they have real competence and expertise, that should be brought to bear on students who have limited opportunities in New York State.

Seldon Kruger
President
Delhi Agricultural and
  Technical College
Delhi Hearing

Business, Economic Development, and Employment

For rural areas of the northeast, which have always had some difficulties attracting the kind of businesses and industries that would be compatible to their lifestyles, economic development is surely the issue of the eighties. Faced with a less attractive mixture of geographic accessibility to markets and transportation, infrastructure, and labor markets than their more developed counterparts, rural areas often lack the basics, not to mention the amenities, that these other areas offer. This puts them at a severe disadvantage in the struggle to attract and hold employers.

Henry Pfeiffer
Economic Development Coordinator
Sullivan County Industrial
Development Agency
Monticello Hearing

Jobs are the key: that's what economic development is all about. Jobs are an essential component for a healthy quality of life.

Paula Osseni
Economic Development Supervisor
Sullivan County Planning Board
Monticello Hearing

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Executive Director, Rural New York Farmworker Opportunities

Timothy J. Palmer
Executive Director
New York State Rural Housing Coalition

Honorable Paul Tonko
Assemblyman
New York State Assembly

Introduction

Symposium participants have attempted to provide a realistic assessment of New York State's rural business, economic development, and employment potential. Their work has revealed a surprising list of opportunities and assets, that help balance weaknesses and problem areas.

Stiffening competition from foreign and out-of-state enterprises represents a major challenge for rural New York. During the past decade, many business enterprises have been shaken into the realization that the state economy is not "the only game in town."

World nations have become increasingly interdependent through the emergence of global economic networks, which capitalize on the relative strengths of national, state, and local economies. Still, early successes have shown state, and state entrepreneurs to be resilient and creative in their efforts to improve our competitive edge and expand markets.

Over the past 30 years, the state has experienced a massive shift from an industrial to a service-oriented employment structure in both rural and metropolitan areas. A recent trend that should help provide a smooth transition to this new economy is the restructuring of public-private partnerships in which business, government, and educational institutions all play decisive roles. Together, these institutions can share information and take advantage of the vast technological capabilities available through joint problem-solving and planning activities.

During the past decade, another trend has been evidenced in rural areas of the state. Although manufacturing employment is a declining proportion of the overall work force in America and most of New York's metropolitan counties, New York State's most rural localities have shown surprising stability in this employment sector, perhaps because of lower production and overhead costs found there.

The biggest single problem faced by rural New York appears to be a lack of information and coordinated use of facts, programs, and capital that are aimed at its unique requirements and opportunities. At present, most information and economic development tends to be gathered for and centered around major metropolitan regions and big business. The small business entrepreneur in rural areas has been largely overlooked up to now. This is further aggravated by the increasing control of rural institutions (banking, insurance, government) by urban oriented interests. Enhancement of rural development loan funds for small businesses would mitigate the consequences of insufficient venture capital in rural areas.

In order to fully understand New York State's present and future economy, the economic health of each county, local community, and business sector must be examined. In addition, an accurate statistical picture and catalog of rural business needs is vital if communications networks are to be improved and specific economic development efforts are to be successfully targeted. These networks will provide a broad range of opportunities for every individual, foster job creation and retention, and enhance regional industries, such as tourism.

Symposium participants suggest that a chief goal for state policymakers is to develop and implement a "Rural Quality of Life Strategy," that focuses on the existing strengths found in rural New York's human, natural, and community resources. The state's potentially lucrative position at the geographic hub of major world and regional markets is a major economic asset. This has been a prime reason for the expansion of foreign firms within the state's borders in the past decade, and for the increased success in penetrating the New York market. Other advantages include rural New York's potential access to financial and information resources; fertile soil and favorable topography; numerous and abundant forest, mineral, and water resources; an extensive road network; quality educational institutions; scenic beauty; a four-season climate; and a strong track record of gains in productivity. Also, of particular significance, is rural New York's diverse economic structure and many small businesses. Such business diversification tends to dampen the negative consequences of periodic, single-industry fluctuations and creates a climate beneficial to the exploration of viable economic alternatives.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS Trends and Assumptions	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Although the overall state population continues to decline, the economically productive age groups have been on the increase during the past 30 years in all areas of the State.	According to a U.S. Census Bureau report there has been a flood of people in the working ages of 18 to 64. That age group experienced a 46 percent gain since 1960. Albany Times Union 5/30/84 ********
• Throughout rural New York State, public and private sector leaders are convening to promote policies and programs to attract and support high-tech companies in step with the advent of an information/service society;	Every SDA must establish a Private Industry Council (PIC), comprised of private sector representatives, educators, union representatives, and community-based and rehabilitation agency representatives, economic development agency personnel, and the New York State Job Service. The PIC and local chief elected officials comprise the "partnership" that is jointly responsible for planning and operating local programs. Lillian Roberts Commissioner NYS Department of Labor Delhi Hearing ********
• The greatest proportionate increases of women in the work force have occurred in the more rural areas of the State over the past 30 years;	The state-wide average of women in the work force has increased 11 percent in the past 30 years. In rural areas of New York, the percentage of increase has been 15 percent or more. Paul Eberts Professor Cornell University Socioeconomic Trends in Rural New York ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• In most New York State counties, as is true throughout the United States, the secondary employment sector (manufacturing) represents a declining proportion of the work force. Only the most rural counties in New York show stability on this indicator;	Franklin County is representive of counties with limited urban influence that are remaining stable in terms of manufacturing jobs. A firm in Malone that manufactures protective clothing has just hired 25 new employees, nearly doubling its work force, and moved into a 36,000 square foot manufacturing facility. Watertown Daily Times 10/25/84 ********
• During the last decade, the proportion of the work force in primary-industry employment (i.e., farming, forestry, mining, fishing, etc.) declined between 15 and 25 percent in rural counties;	The economy and work force of New York State have undergone vast internal changes during the past century, yet have remained stable and strong. Within the stable economy there have been great changes in employment. Jobs in agriculture have declined steadily and dramatically. Ruth Young Research Associate Cornell University ********
• The overwhelming majority (70%) of employment in New York State in 1980 was in the service sector (i.e., professional, technical, wholesale and retail trade). The greatest growth in this sector since 1950 has occurred in the state's rural counties.	The growth in tertiary (service) sector employment as a percentage of the work force in rural areas has been about 15 percent, as compared to 10 percent for metropolitan counties. Paul Eberts Professor Cornell University Socioeconomic Trends in Rural New York ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Business/government/educational interactions, once viewed with skepticism at best, are now being developed as an innovative approach to the creation of future economic vitality.	Most of the community colleges have a long history of cooperation between local business and industry and, as a result, we have developed considerable expertise that can be available to potential new employers. We are trying to keep those people in our area happy, help them to expand and certainly not give them any reason to think that they might have to move. John Walters President Sullivan County Community College Monticello Hearing
• The shift toward new forms of public/private partnerships is gaining momentum and is a new form of enterprise that may shape much of rural New York's future economic and social endeavors.	The restructuring of private/public partnerships in which business, government, and educational institutions play decisive roles is an important trend to be noted in many recent New York development efforts, especially in the development of new financing mechanisms for rural industry and business. Kim Blot Director of Rural Affairs NYS Department of Ag & Markets Albany Hearing ********
• Emphasis is shifting throughout American society from saving "sunset" industries to retraining people several times during their working lives. For example, adult New Yorkers are returning to the classroom in large numbers, in search of new job skills (i.e., the adult student population is larger than the traditional age group in many local colleges in New York State).	There are so many adults that are going back to school and retraining themselves. It's amazing. Maureen Curry Director Olean Public Library Olean Hearing ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- Stiffening competition from foreign enterprises represents a major challenge for rural New York. During the past decade, many business enterprises have been shaken by their inability to compete.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The Eureka Tent company in Walton, New York, has been forced to close its doors after 15 years of operation. The major reason cited for closing the plant and sending 58 people to look for jobs, is the world economy and lower priced imports from abroad.

The Walton Reporter
11/14/84

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- Natural Resources:

  - Rural New York is ideally positioned at the geographic center of major markets with potential access to financial, creative and informational resources;

  - Insulation from natural disasters and major geologic disturbances provides a stable setting for commerce and industry;

  - Many areas of rural New York are available for new uses and renewal. Also, favorable topography and modest land prices offer numerous options for a variety of new industries;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The lower Hudson region is an especially attractive location for major market corporations. Localities in that area are drawing Manhattan office tenants because of lower rental costs while still maintaining accessability to the city.

Middletown Times Herald Record
7/10/84

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The Adirondacks are home to dozens of earthquakes a year, but because the area lies within the interior of a geological plate - a huge section of rock floating on the earth's molten core - rather than on the edge of one, the quakes are rarely noticed. New York's level of major earthquake activity is 100 times lower compared to California.

Albany Times Union
10/24/84

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So what we have here in Sullivan County is a board of supervisors, fully united behind an economic development person, who has worked diligently to help put together a document which shows we have an inventory of available buildings and properties. We have finally put our act together to the extent that when you bring an industrial client into Sullivan County, you can indicate to the client why they should come to Sullivan County and you're able to deal with their problems and their needs.

David Kaufman
Supervisor
Town of Thompson
Monticello Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Water resources include an abundance of lakes and rivers, as well as access to ocean facilities available for commercial and sport fishing, recreational use, energy production and transportation. High quality drinking water serves citizens' needs throughout the State;

- Mineral resources present an untapped potential for economic growth. Natural gas, talc, iron ore, and other resources can solidify rural New York's economic base;

- Abundant, fertile soil and a favorable climate provide an opportunity for further growth in agriculture;

- Clean, crisp, fresh air makes rural new York attractive to a variety of people - both as a vacationland and as a place to live and work.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Innovative ways must be found to use renewable resources. Water should be viewed as the oil of the northeast and the uses for the water supply that we have should be prioritized and some attempt to put a market value upon them. Small hydroelectric facilities and municipal electrical companies could help alleviate the major energy cost that we find in rural areas.

Loretta Simon
Hudson Valley Heritage Task Force
Kingston Hearing

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Natural gas is a resource that we have in this county and in a lot of the other counties in the state. I think that this is a very important key to our future industrial development.

James Carr
Director
Cayuga County Planning Board
Auburn Hearing

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I think our greatest strength in New York State is our natural resources. We have the soil and the weather for agriculture to do well.

Donna Burr
President
Schoharie County Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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I think the planning boards that are in existence throughout Sullivan County are very well aware of their area. I know in my own town the quality of the air and water, of the fishing and the hunting is uppermost in most people's minds. They want to see the trees and they want to breathe the fresh air.

Paul Rausch
Supervisor
Town of Forestburg
Monticello Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths (cont'd.)

- Human Resources:
  - A strong cultural heritage and sense of community pervade rural New York localities. In addition, environmental factors and a history which spans several centuries, contribute to a generally positive and appealing quality of life;
  - An extensive system of primary, secondary and higher education institutions offer a wide array of programs and curricula. Technical, vocational, academic and life-skill programs, coupled with research capabilities, provide students with basic competencies to join a productive work force;
  - A pervasive work ethic and a strong track record of productivity combine to make the New York worker a viable asset in the production of high-quality goods and services;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The characteristics of rural areas are often a selling point for firms moving into the area. Environmental factors and proximity to available cultural resources are strong determinants in rural area growth.

Aaron S. Gurwitz
"Sleepy Hollow Wakes Up"
Empire State Report
October, 1984

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We have an excellent education system here. Our high schools are graduating many people who are heading on to college. Our community college here is outstanding, as they are throughout the state. In the rural areas there is no lack of availability of productive people.

Richard Lanza
Chairman
Sullivan County Private Industry
Council
Monticello Hearing

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New York State's greatest rural resource is the people residing in these areas. Rural New Yorkers possess a work ethic that is not likely to be prevalent among urban residents. This work ethic and attitude of commitment yields a productive work source that can contribute immeasurably to the success of a business or industry. It is a resource that should be viewed as the primary element for addressing rural concerns.

Dr. David Huntington
President
SUNY Ag & Tech College at Alfred
Olean Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
- Despite recent economic downturns, more people are employed today in rural New York than at any other time in past history;	The North Country/Adirondack region has 1,293 manufacturing plants, with more than 85,000 employees. The work force produces more than $6 billion in products annually, with over 10,000 farms annually producing more than $433,000,000. Frank A. Augsbury, Jr. President Adirondack North Country Association Plattsburgh Press Republican 11/17/84 *******
- The individual entrepreneur and small business person may hold the key to economic growth and development in rural communities, since it is in small firms that most of the new job opportunities are being created in the state and national economies. Happily, small business enterprise is a strong tradition in rural New York State and there is a pool of retired entrepreneurs that may be available to assist younger business people;	There is a tendency for economic developers to focus on attracting big business or industry to the rural areas in order to provide jobs and to improve the tax base. While such enterprises may look appealing because of potentially large impacts on the rural economy, efforts to attract large scale business to rural areas may be misplaced. Large new ventures may actually draw business away from existing establishments rather than create a new business. The County Planning Board is concerned that the present economic base of rural areas should be maintained and strengthened. Thus, we would recommend expanding upon existing resources — for example, developing new agriculture and forest products industries — rather than concentrating on attracting large ventures which have no direct tie to the local economy. Fred Menz Chairman St. Lawrence County Planning Board Canton Hearing One hundred percent of new jobs created in the past six years have been due to small business. Corporate and industry jobs are exactly stable, with losses in one industry compensated for by gains in another. James King Executive Director NYS Small Business Development Center Plattsburgh Press Republican 10/8/84 ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths (Cont'd.)

- New York State governments do a good job of providing services and set a standard for the nation (i.e., good transportation, educational services, and parks/recreational facilities);

- Existing Community Resource Base:
  - Rural New York possesses such transportation capabilities as an extensive road network, airports, waterways, and rail lines that provide effective movement of people, raw materials, and finished goods;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We offer for consideration the suggestion that our strong county governments be a recognizable state asset. Counties in New York State are major providers of services; close enough to the people to respond to their needs, but large enough to gain by economies of scale. They can insure the minimum services are provided to rural towns and villages that these local units might otherwise be unable to generate themselves.

Delmar Palm
Majority Leader
Cortland County Legislature
Auburn Hearing

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A company needs instant transportation; that's the most crucial factor to them. They locate at sites which would have accessibility to transportation, either proximity to an airport or some other international operation. I think the point that we get at here is that the firms which have caused our county to prosper are those which need good accessibility but not necessarily that sitting on top of an airport. We don't have that and there isn't very much we can do about it. Because of our proximity to the "H" pattern which is formed between I-84, the New York State Thruway, and the Massachusetts Turnpike, for a firm that has to deliver goods anywhere within the New England-Pennsylvania-Chicago area, Ulster County is a very acceptable location.

Herbert Heckler
Director
Ulster County Planning Board
Kingston Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- All of rural New York's "economic eggs are not found in one basket." Such business diversification tends to neutralize the effect of periodic single-industry fluctuations;
- Forests provide essential raw materials suitable for home use, export, energy production, and wood product manufacturing. This renewable resource has the potential to revitalize the "finished products" industry in rural New York communities;
- "Helping thy neighbor" is a rural tradition which fosters a sense of community. Volunteerism is prevalent; New Yorkers are intent on making the personal investment required to plan and revitalize commerce and industry in rural areas, but seek direction in accomplishing this task.
- Existing communications, waste treatment, and utility facilities provide a ready environment for new industry. Unused plants and other buildings offer an opportunity for innovative refitting to meet changing community and industrial needs;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

How far each county can diversify has an awful lot to do with where that county is located, from the standpoint of a major population area, and the resources the county possesses. We grew as a part agricultural, part resort industry county. The mobility of the population has affected our resort industry to the extent that it's narrowing down to a few very sound establishments, and to compensate for that decline, light manufacturing industry is being sought.

Ed Curtis
Chairman
Town of Delaware Planning Board
Monticello Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Natural Resources:

  - Comparative energy costs may place rural New York at a distinct disadvantage with other states when competing for new industry or in persuading existing industry to stay. However, heating costs, cited as a barrier to new industry, must be compared with energy costs in other milder climates where extreme heat and humidity affect productivity;

  - Rural New York shares the universal concern of toxic waste disposal and the battle to preserve existing resources from pollution. Acid rain, pesticide residue, and hazardous industrial waste can no longer be ignored. Costs and time restraints imposed to combat these problems tend to dissuade industry from expanding or relocating in rural New York;

  - Although deemed an asset to the tourism/recreation industry, New York's "frost-belt" climate precludes certain types of agriculture and commerce.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

If you're looking at energy from the electrical standpoint, certainly we are in one of the high cost areas. Central Hudson is predominantly oil-fired and that is reflected in their rates, but to companies like IBM the cost of service is not nearly as important as the quality of service, the dependability.

Herbert Heckler
Director
Ulster County Planning Board
Kingston Hearing

The Edison Electric Institute has surveyed a number of utilities in the northeast. The results of their study, entitled Typical Residential, Commercial and Industrial Bills - Investor Owned Utilities, show that New York State Electric and Gas compete most favorably.

Richard D'Attilio
Industrial Development Representative
New York State Electric and Gas

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The public is very critical of what we want to do. People will let us know they don't approve of a situation if it isn't healthy for the area. There are a large number of people in the county who are policing the situation to make sure development won't be detrimental to the environment.

David Kaufman
Supervisor
Town of Thompson
Monticello Hearing

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Certain industries are precluded from location or expansion in the "frost-belt" climate because of its harshness, but also because of the effect the climate has on people: out migration. People are leaving the "frost-belt" areas for warmer southern climates. New York was the only state at the last census to record a population loss.

Syracuse Post Standard
10/10/84

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Human Resources:
  - Efforts by independent localities to protect "their own turf," hinder the formulation and implementation of a coordinated economic policy that transcends traditional boundary lines. This situation is fueled by lack of understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, and appropriate responses of various localities and regions;
  - Duplicative government services aimed at solving the same problem often hinder state and local efforts that would otherwise benefit an entire region through a smaller commitment of resources (i.e., State Department of Environmental Conservation and United States Environmental Protection Agency);
  - Unemployment levels in rural New York have been consistently higher than in metropolitan counties during the past 30 years. Factors contributing to this include the movement of the secondary manufacturing sector to automation, the entrance of additional family members into the labor force, and the growth in the overall size of the labor force;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Local officials need more information on the value of each resource indigenous to their area in order to form a balanced view of their assets and a balanced approach to development. Many communities are making policy decisions which allow irreversible loss of valuable assets in the interest of short-term again. These conditions exist for several reasons. One is the almost exclusive reliance on the property tax to generate local government revenue. This causes a competition among neighboring communities to increase their individual tax base.

Loretta Simon
Hudson Valley Heritage Task Force
Kingston Hearing

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One factor business has blamed for the faltering New York already has experienced, is overregulation. Admittedly, there is a lot of overlap in our regulatory institutions. We have to look at them with an eye toward streamlining them.

William Donohue
NYS Department of Commerce
Middletown Times Herald Record
5/21/84

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Since 1960, the most rural counties have had unemployment levels 50 percent higher than metropolitan counties.

Paul Eberts
Professor
Cornell University
Socioeconomic Trends in
Rural New York

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

  - Rural counties have lower proportions of their adult populations with college experience than do metropolitan counties. This may retard the movement of rural economies toward taking optimum advantage of the changes occurring in New York's shift toward a post-industrial service economy.

- Existing Community Resource Base:

  - A statistical picture of rural life, communities, and resources in New York State is skewed by the inexact method of interpolating numbers from the standard metropolitan areas used by Federal, State, and local agencies;

  - Soaring construction costs, failure to institute periodic maintenance, and a present lack of funds threaten to put much of rural New York's public facilities in a state of disrepair;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Nearly 25 percent more adults in metropolitan counties than in rural counties have college backgrounds. This difference undoubtedly gives people from metropolitan counties numerous advantages in the competition for jobs.

Paul Eberts
Professor
Cornell University
Socioeconomic Trends in
Rural New York

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There's a great difference between the specificity of the information available to the communities that are in standard metropolitan statistical areas, and those located in rural areas.

John Grover
Regional Director
State of New York Mortgage Agency
Kingston Hearing

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How do you finance new water or sewer districts in advance of need, in order to attract the development in the location that one seeks? On the other hand, industries come into a community and say, "If you don't have it already in place, well, we can go elsewhere." Having site-ready industrial parks is one of our most difficult problems in trying to attract new industry to the community.

Herbert Heckler
Director
Ulster County Planning
Kingston Hearing

Problems relating to infrastructure are probably the single largest obstacle to development in rural areas. Public services, essential to most businesses, are non-existent or in a state of chronic disrepair.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- In some areas of rural New York, inadequate public transportation services (airports, rail lines, and buses) create barriers to economic growth.

- Commitment to People:
  - Personal, sales, and real property taxes fund public services and facilities, which serve businesses and communities. Yet, taxes, when excessive, provide a salient argument for businesses and people to relocate outside New York State;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The small tax base characteristic of rural areas prohibits local financing of these systems, while government programs for construction and repair dwindle.

Henry Pfeiffer
Economic Development Coordinator
Sullivan County Industrial
Development Agency
Monticello Hearing

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There is an excellent opportunity for economic growth if the transportation system is good enough for them to live here and get to where they can employ their skills. I'm thinking in terms of IBM and computers. There's a huge market for them over there, but it's a tough hill to get over in the winter. Our transportation system is going to have a lot to do with whether they work or not.

Ed Curtis
Chairman
Town of Delaware Planning Board
Monticello Hearing

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High sales, property, utility and personal income taxes keep business away or motivate others to leave. High personal income tax provides a direct disincentive to remain in New York state or move to New York state.

William Donohue
Commissioner
NYS Department of Commerce
Middletown Times Herald Record
5/21/84

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- On the Federal level, Washington looks at New York as a predominately urban state. Consequently, New York's agriculture, business, and rural areas are not viewed with a separate eye to their special problems. The present milk assessment is a prime example. New York State, unlike western producers at which the solution is directed, can consume all of the milk it produces.
- Generally inadequate sources of venture capital and, as banks continue to consolidate and merge, private venture capital may become even less available to rural business in the future. At the Federal and State levels, capital programs such as S.B.A. are directed at urban communities;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program has an urban bias in the sense that communities that have concentrated areas of problems tend to be looked at more highly in their application than more spread out areas. It's a whole population thing: if there aren't large numbers of population, you tend not to do as well with most of the funding programs.

Paula Jasend
Economic Development Supervisor
Sullivan County Planning Board
Monticello Hearing

Jobs and incomes are largely increased by creating new investments and establishing new firms, yet the rural banking system apparently is not adequate to handle this. A recent study indicated that only about one-quarter of rural banks can put together large packages for manufacturing business investment. As a result, most banks shift their money to metropolitan banks. The metropolitan banks put the packages together and give the money to larger corporations to reinvest in rural areas. The control of the rural institution then lies in a place that isn't rural in its orientation. This raises the question of commitment to the rural area, and the possibility of unemployment and underutilized infrastructure should the company decide to leave the community.

Paul Eberts
Professor
Cornell University
Nevele Hearing

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Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Rural business, economic development and employment goals should be aimed at capitalizing on the State's numerous and diverse resources, especially those where it has a distinct, comparative advantage. In some instances, problems or weaknesses must first be addressed in order to develop these opportunities.

- Devise a "Rural Quality of Life Strategy" which focuses on present human, natural, and community resources.

- Emphasize in all economic development efforts the need to promote a diversity of individual employment opportunities that will encourage greater equality and upward mobility for the people of the State.

- Attract, retain and enhance small business through the provision of entrepreneurial skills training and new sources of financing. For example, the continued strength of the economic base for all three employment sectors - primary, secondary, and tertiary - is largely dependent on an influx of capital from outside sources.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The idea of a rural quality of life strategy is well placed. We should emphasize the positive aspects of rural New York that are attractive to both individuals and industry. We have strength in human resources, great post-secondary educational services, and a growing cooperation between business, government, and education in the rural areas.

David Kaufman
Supervisor
Town of Thompson
Monticello Hearing

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The ability of a community to provide adequate community facilities, affordable housing opportunities for people of all income levels, and equity in receiving a fair share of state and federal resources are all economic issues. It seems to me that an overriding consideration in our deliberation should be the improvement of economic conditions in rural areas.

James Carr
Director
Cayuga County Planning Board
Auburn Hearing

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There is a businessman in our town who would like to expand. He employs four people right now and there is no way we can assist him. Forestburg doesn't qualify for UDAG. The town has given him a 50 percent abatement in taxes, but that is as far as we can go. He's already been approached by people in Pennsylvania to move down there. We have no source of financing to keep him here and help him expand.

Paul Rausch
Supervisor
Town of Forestburg
Monticello Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Devise a systematic method of data collection, inventory, and analysis relative to labor markets, demographics, and product trends that will promote greater understanding of rural strengths and weaknesses.
    - Such a data base should be available to assist all rural residents and enterprises;
    - Research should analyze the tertiary-service sector in order to identify which aspects offer the greatest potential for rural localities and the state as a whole.
- A further essential piece of research is to analyze and determine what policies rural localities can follow in order to increase their chances for smooth transitions within a predominately post-industrial service economy. For example, "exporting" the rural labor force to urban areas may well be the way to "develop" without the need for industry/factories moving into an area of natural beauty.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

In some states, sources of information are centralized and reports are generated routinely. In New York State we have many sources of information, although at times it appears that one state agency doesn't know what the other is doing. This leads to duplication and confusion. We suggest this Commission consider promoting integration and consolidation of data bases, and promoting access to the data base in program activity.

Delmar Palm
Majority Leader
Cortland County Legislature
Auburn Hearing

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New types of industry must be found to re-employ people displaced by industry that left and will probably never return to the area. For many, a new place of work outside the area will be the only answer. This has been true in my own household where my husband has been commuting to Syracuse, 40 miles each way, from the southern end of Cayuga County. This may be the way for the future, so support should be given to transportation companies to increase their shuttle service to the city.

Barbara Lamphere
Executive Director
Cayuga County Homsite Development
Auburn Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Strengthen public/private initiatives in order to maximize development efforts. Such efforts should include improved manpower training and retraining, the elimination of costly and inefficient overlap and/or gaps in government programs, small business enhancement, and the data gathering and analyses noted previously.

- Develop a means for bringing the "underground economy" into the economic data analysis and taxation structure (e.g., farm stands, crafts and other undocumented enterprises).

- Monitor and scrutinize public services and cost containment. For instance, public service improvements should fill real gaps before seeking to improve levels of service generally regarded as adequate in a particular community.

- Develop a long-range capital improvement program for transportation and community facilities.

- Promote a positive "self-image" and perception by rural residents, employers, and communities in order to stimulate greater motivation and potential for economic improvement.

Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

A number of public policy questions about rural business,economic development, and employment arise from the previous analysis of trends, strengths, and weaknesses. Following are examples of those state policymakers will be examining.

- How can New York State, and its rural localities respond to the changing nature of economic development and employment patterns? For example, computers and communication devices, which are means for overcoming the friction of time and space, make a decentralization of metropolitan functions to rural areas eminently possible (i.e., back-office concept);

- How can government assist rural localities in taking up the slack in their productive capacities? Some benefits of rural economic growth include a more equitable distribution of jobs, income, and education, in which rural areas now lag. Also, a more efficient and productive state economy would evolve since some capacity in rural areas is presently underutilized.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

In a global economy, New York needs to offer business and industry an environment that provides adequate telecommunications for inventory and dollar transactions between headquarters and remote sites. Without that capability, New York will not attract more businesses.

Gregory Benson, Jr.
NYS Education Department
Center for Learning Technologies
Watertown Daily Times
10/6/84

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Do state and local governments have a responsibility to promote an equitable distribution of computer and telecommunications equipment in rural localities in order to facilitate economic development?	
• Which components of the business sector offer the most potential as viable economic bases for rural localities?	
- For example, if the tertiary sector were disaggregated into categories such as legal services, consulting firms, trade and commerce, etc., and studies were conducted of their economic viability, state and local government might be able to focus their energies and resources more efficiently in assisting one another;	
- Manufacturing and farming are still major contributors to rural economies. It is important to discern how they interrelate to the array of services found in the tertiary sector.	We agree that there is a lack of coordinated economic policy that transcends traditional boundary lines. The business community, along with the Legislature and the New York State Department of Commerce, need to design a comprehensive economic development program which would make New York competitive with surrounding states for new industrial locations. Business Council of New York State Kingston Hearing ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- What policies can rural areas follow in order to increase their chances for achieving smooth transitions into the future economic structure of the State? For example:
  - How essential is industrial park development? Better sewer, water, and other public utilities?
  - Should curriculum changes in educational programs reflect the changing economic climates of rural localities?
  - Is there a need for better networking among local leaders so that they are working toward common economic and employment objectives with workable, complimentary strategies?
- Should tax benefits and development loans be available to foreign firms who wish to locate in New York State, for better access to major markets?
- What advantages and disadvantages are there for manufacturing establishments that may wish to locate in rural areas?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Industrial parks certainly have their advantages. For one thing they concentrate industries in one area so that you don't spread them out too much, and you can accomodate them with water and sewer lines and utilities more easily in one area. They're a good resource, but they may not be for every area.

Paula Osseni
Economic Development Supervisor
Sullivan County Planning Board
Monticello Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- What advantages and disadvantages are there for localities that wish to promote economic development? For example:
    - How do we insure that businesses which construct manufacturing plants based on certain tax or government financial incentives will not pull up stakes and leave as soon as the tax advantage of the business incentive expires?
    - Should tax advantages be offered for the construction of new firms which may compete with already-established area businesses?
- Should authorities with bonding capability be required to accomodate the smaller scale of projects in rural areas?
    - Should these authorities be permitted to support retail industries, which are growing in rural areas?
- What role is there for expanded cooperation between government, business, and education in public/private partnerships, as a means to enhance economic development?

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- What is the effect of "one-industry towns" in which the entire economy is dependent upon the health of a single industry?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The one industry town problem does occur. When a particular sector of the economy is disrupted and a business like a paper mill shuts down, the impact on the community is devastating. The communities are used to be taken care of by the corporation. They don't know how to take care of, and they can't afford to fix, their community facilities when the company is gone.

William Johnston
Director
Essex County Planning Board
Troy Hearing

Tourism isn't always the economic panacea it poses to be. You have the psychological trauma that goes with unemployment. We all know the winter hardship of alcoholism, unemployment, and welfare dependency. Tourism can also reduce the life changes of some people whose goal of twenty weeks of employment to draw unemployment payments the rest of the year. There is no desire to gain other skills.

Michele Pinard
Long Lake Resident
Watertown Daily Times
6/25/84

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Agriculture

Densely populated, non-rural areas need rural New York for their very survival. Even the wonders of urban development and their high-rise buildings could not exist but for the commodities whose origin is found in rural areas.

Kermit Huttar
Member
Board of Education
Port Byron Central School District
Syracuse Hearing

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Introduction

Agriculture continues to be a dominant industry in New York State, one that exerts substantial multiplier effects on regional economies. Current estimates reveal that over 670,000 persons are employed in agricultural-related fields in New York State (including production, processing, and distribution). However, of this total, only 16 percent are actually involved in production labor. Sales of agricultural products equaled approximately $2.4 billion dollars in 1982. New York agricultural products make their way into local, state, national, and global markets. In addition, agriculture continues to be a major force that enhances the quality of life and landscape throughout New York State.

The agriculture industry produces a variety of food, forage, forest, ornamental, and animal products on nearly ten million acres of land. An important goal for the state is to ensure the continued availability and productive potential of farmland. A dramatic decline in acres harvested in agriculture has occurred over the last thirty years, with only a slight reversal of this trend during the 1970s. Substitution of marginal farmland for prime land in the state is another threat to maintenance of a viable agricultural resource base. Efforts to minimize losses have realized some success, but have failed to stop this trend. Farmland retention programs (such as the Agricultural Districts Program) also have negative side-effects on the local tax base, placing excessive strain on many communities as they try to maintain their community facilities and services.

An additional and highly important goal is further diversification of New York State's produce and greater reliance upon regional marketing strategies as a means of cutting down transportation costs, as well as providing greater geographic self-sufficiency and stability in the state's agricultural community. Diversification efforts should also take into account the advent of new technologies as well as providing cost-effective methods of mitigating environmental and economic barriers (e.g., drainage, market development/accessibility, etc.)

The future economic viability of agriculture is the major concern since today's farmer increasingly must operate in a high-risk, high-cost environment. Wide recognition of the need for increased individual and collective marketing strategies and greater responsiveness to consumer demands is now evident as producers seek to compete with other states and nations. Efforts should be targeted towards minimizing or eliminating competitive advantages enjoyed by out-of-state producers that are afforded them by special programs and subsidies, and low tariffs.

Additionally, policymakers should strive to provide an economic atmosphere conducive to the development and maintenance of a healthy agricultural industry by reducing the cost of doing business in the state. New York's agriculture industry faces heightened pressure from other states to attract food processing and manufacturing firms, and the recent loss of a number of these firms to other states is attributed to a comparatively poor climate for agribusiness in New York State.

Another critical problem facing the state's agriculture industry is the gradual and insidious decline of roads and bridges which provide vital linkages with suppliers and markets. There is also increased concern that the growing number of non-farm residents in rural areas will further dilute the influence of the agriculture community in state and local decision making. Members of the farm community have already noted the increasing incidence of nuisance complaints received from other users of the state's rural resources.

An example is the attribution of algae in some New York City reservoirs to river front farm pastures upstream.

One major policy issue involves the means to develop a more innovative marketing strategy for New York agricultural products, and to engage the participation of all components of New York's agricultural products industry in the success of this venture. Another is the question of some government bureaucratic procedures and regulatory measures people feel are serious barriers to innovation and progress in the agriculture industry.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Trends and Assumptions	
• Increasing pressure from other states and nations competing in limited markets.	Commodities are facing increased competition of subsidized and unsubsidized products coming into New York from both marketers in other states as well as from other countries. This means that everyone involved in N.Y.S. agriculture is going to have to do their part in meeting this competition. Kenneth E. Pollard Apple and Cherry Growers of New York State Canandaigua Hearing ********
• Gradual decline of secondary roads and bridges vital to the agriculture industry.	The condition of roads and bridges in New York is a major concern to us. We depend on roads and bridges for our inputs and to market our products. The recently passed bond issue is a band-aid approach. We support efforts to create a dedicated highway fund. John Greenwood Local Dairy Farmer- Member, St. Lawrence County Farm Bureau Canton Hearing ********
• Recent increase in number of people engaged in direct marketing. In 1979, one-fifth of the farmers operating in New York engaged in some form of direct marketing. This may represent a return to levels of direct marketing common in the earlier part of the century.	In the area of agriculture, there must be more done in looking at regional marketing for reducing the distance from producer to consumer (in view of current trends in transportation and food distribution in the county)... A good example of regional marketing strategy is the farmers markets. In Schoharie County we have a recently constructed Interstate (I-88), which besides covering acres and acres of good farm land, brings apples from the state of Washington, carrots from California, and strawberries from out west, etc... goods which we produce right in the area. The point is, there should be a better processing and distribution arrangement within the state to make beneficial use of its tremendous agricultural resource. Mary O'Donnell Schoharie Valley Environmental Conservation Association Delhi Hearing
	The phenomenal growth of farm markets providing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The rate of decline in number of farms in New York slowed during the 1970s. However, there were about 990 fewer farms in 1982 than in 1978.

- Total farmland acreage increased by 496,200 acres between 1974 and 1978. However, it declined by about 280,000 acres between 1978 and 1982. (Data on trends in the amount of prime agricultural land in New York being lost to development are not available.)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

direct farmer to consumer linkages will continue to be a healthy part of our industry's development, and is a good example of market growth for agriculture.

Jack Hughes
Director of Governmental Relations
NYS Farm Bureau
Albany Hearing

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The Maine Department of Agriculture recently determined that their state's agricultural industry was threatened by continued farmland loss beyond a "critical mass point". "Critical mass" refers to the number of farms and farmers needed to support agricultural machinery dealers, short-line manufacturers, creditors, extension personnel, and all else which constitutes a healthy agricultural industry. Roughly two-thirds of Maine's former agricultural land base (3 million acres) was lost to urban development, abandonment, and erosion between 1945 and 1978... The loss of crucial support services and markets, and the collapse of other major farm commodity groups is the threat presented by this situation.

Gordon Helsen
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

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The loss of farmland affects both the economy and the scenic character of the rural landscape. Preservationists nationwide recognize that to preserve a rural landscape, a farmer must be allowed to make a living on land. Once again government policies must be examined for their adverse impacts on agriculture, especially, assessment practices and taxation policy.

Lorretta Simon
Task Force for the Hudson
River Valley Inc.
Kingston Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- Growing development pressure in the rural land market leading to increases in agricultural land prices and higher property taxes. The average value of an acre of farmland rose from $326 in 1975 to $544 in 1982.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Agricultural lands need to be preserved and maintained at stable levels. Urban expansion and encroachment by residential development continues to be an increasing problem. Centralized construction and development is generally preferable to the detrimental effects of sprawl and non-essential use... Construction of housing may be able to be planned around agricultural areas or districts so as to not disturb these lands. A 1974 Environmental Protection Agency study found suburban sprawl wasteful and costly. Planned communities that employ a mixture of highrise and walkup apartments, townhouses, and a few clustered, one-family houses may be preferable to the typical suburban development of one-family houses on sizable lots.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

The National Agricultural Lands Study notes, "Urban pressures in scattered development occurs in wide belts around urban areas and brings conflicting land uses into juxtaposition". This creates high costs for public services and stimulates land speculation.

Prime farmlands are easiest and least costly to build on and thus, are often chosen first for development.

Land prices in urban areas will continue to sharply increase. Unless protected by tax deferments, some farmers are forced to sell land. As the best farm lands become less available, marginally productive lands are cultivated, requiring more fertilizer, tractor fuel, and are more vulnerable to soil erosion... Increased cost are incurred and farm profits suffer.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

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- The moderate-size farm is a declining segment of all farming:

Small farms need ways with which to deal with larger conglomerate agricultural producers. In areas such as the St. Lawrence region, dairy farms have to compete with large corporations to keep their lands and businesses going. When small farms are replaced by corporate farms, much is lost to the community; especially locally-based land management, which includes ecologic sensitivity for the land, neighborhood

- Increase in the number of small (under 50 acres) farms in recent years. In 1978, 18.5 percent of all farms were under 50 acres. This figure increased to 22.1 percent in 1982.

- The percentage of the state's farmland acreage owned by large farms (greater than 500 acres) is growing; it rose from 28.5 to 30.2 between 1974 and 1978.

- Increase in debt-to-asset ratio in agriculture industry from 16.3 to 22.1 percent between 1973 and 1982.

- Decline of $139 million in total market value of New York agricultural products sold between 1969 and 1978 (adjusted to 1980 dollars). Also, the average per-acre market value of agricultural products produced in New York declined from $249 to $241 between 1969 and 1978.

cooperation, and other benefits of having family-run businesses as neighbors.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- The dairy industry continues to be the largest sector of New York agriculture. Moreover, the market value of dairy products increased as a proportion of cash receipts from all New York agricultural products between 1978 and 1982.
- Declining number and increasing average size of dairy farms. However, total acreage in dairy farms declined slightly in the state between 1974 and 1978.
- Net farm income declined $78.5 million in the two years following its peak of $454.1 million in 1979.
- Increasing pressure from other states to attract firms in the food processing and manufacturing sectors. Over the last decade, the number of food manufacturing firms in New York State declined by one-third and employment in these firms fell 22 percent.
- Increase in producer-owned processing facilities operated on a cooperative basis.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Certainly, dairying is, and should remain, an important industry in New York State. However, we have to find ways of cushioning it from cyclical ups and downs in the market. One possible means of achieving this is by promoting energy generating potentials of the farm itself... we can generate tremendous amounts of heat for our barns (or even covered greenhouses) by utilizing manure or whey by-products.

Mary Verlaque
Director of Planning
St. Lawrence Co. Planning Dept.
Canton Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- National food consumption patterns have changed little overall in the last two decades, with some major exceptions. Consumption of dairy products has declined as a percent of annual per capita consumption, while poultry consumption has increased.

- Increase in the number of farms producing specialty items.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Strengths and Assets	
• Access to a variety of capital sources for most farmers.	We are concerned about the availability of credit to farmers. We do not believe that there is a credit shortage. Rather, we believe that some of the problems that we face today are caused by the easy credit policies of the past, and we would oppose efforts to create low interest loans for production agriculture at this point. John Greenwood Local Dairy Farmer- Member, St. Lawrence County Farm Bureau Canton Hearing ********
• Interstate highway network, rail system, ports, and waterways that link New York producers in agricultural regions to suppliers, processing facilities, and markets throughout the state and world.	Transportation facilities are listed as a "strength and asset" in the Agriculture Preliminary Report, and are indeed essential to the success of N.Y. agriculture. Efficient distribution and the maintenance of transportation systems are major factors affecting food prices, product availability, and commercial success. Transportation is now a major cost. More efficient transportation to markets would benefit both supplier and consumer. Prompt attention should be given to the relationship of agricultural goods and services to railroad systems. Gordon Helman Sierra Club Albany Hearing ********
• Large contribution of agriculture industry to New York State's economy. While employment in agricultural production and services was 172,559, total agriculture-related employment amounted to 567,548 in 1978. The agriculture-related economic multiplier is much higher than in most other industries. Also, the value added per employee in food manufacturing ranks higher than the average for all other New York manufacturing industries.	Agriculture is still the largest single industry in the state of New York, and is very unique in that the dollars in agriculture seem to turn over more times in the community than dollars generated from any other single industry in the state. Richard Turrell Farmer - Oneonta, New York Delhi Hearing Agriculture's high economic multiplier factor means that the economic benefits of a strong farm sector extends well beyond the farm gate.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Land area and its diverse ownership; relatively low land prices.
- Soil capabilities; New York State's long history of soil and water conservation activities.
- Climate conducive to the production of a wide variety of crops and products.
- Abundance of surface and subsurface water resources; generally well-distributed rainfall.
- Statewide diversity of agricultural products, including food, forage, forest, ornamental, animals.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

For too long the state's largest industry, agriculture, has been taken for granted and not seen as a priority for the overwelming majority of state lawmakers. Efforts such as this by the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources are vital if we are to make the majority of lawmakers and public officials more aware of the problems facing the farm industry.

Jack Hughes
Director of Governmental Relations
NYS Farm Bureau
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths (cont'd.)

- Proximity to local, large regional, and world markets.
- Management skills and expertise of people involved in agriculture.
- Information, research, and development resources, especially SUNY College of Agriculture and Life Science at Cornell, the Agricultural and Technical Colleges, and the Cooperative Extension Service.
- Proximity of processing and manufacturing facilities to most New York State farmers, although this advantage may be lessening.
- Long history of legislative support of agriculture.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Lack of innovative and progressive individual and collective marketing of many commodities. Strong need for better communication and linkages among producers, wholesalers, retailers, shippers, and other intermediaries in order to strengthen New York State products in domestic and international markets.

- New York State institutional and individual consumption of local production represents a large, under-exploited potential market.

- Some firms in food processing and manufacturing have been leaving New York recently. However, it is not clear if this represents a net loss of production capacity. Still, much of the food consumed in New York is processed out-of-state, e.g., kosher meat products processed elsewhere.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

One weakness which has been identified is the lack of innovative and progressive marketing, either individual or collective. This impacts greatly on the hundreds of livestock (beef, sheep and goats) producers throughout NYS who raise less than ten head per year. In the North Country, these animals are marketed along with, and get the same price as a cull dairy cow... consequently, someone other than the producer is pocketing the profits.

William Chamberlain
Chairman, Black River St.
 Lawrence Resource Conservation
and Development Council
Canton Hearing

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The Commission Preliminary Report on Agriculture indicates that New York State is second in the nation in the growing of apples, a good portion of those coming from Clinton County, but when I turn on my television the only apple advertisement I see is for Washington State apples.

Fred Aufschlager
Clinton Co. Planning Department
Canton Hearing

We encourage the State to continue its efforts to assist New York producers to market our produce to the large institutional state markets.

Kenneth E. Pollard
Apple and Cherry Growers
 of New York State
Canandaigua Hearing

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From the processing and marketing standpoint of diversified agriculture, I believe there is not a Kosher packing plant in New York State. If I want livestock to be marketed or processed for Kosher market... I must transport them to Lancaster, Pennsylvania in order to find a packing house which can handle that kind of market. In order to fully tap our agricultural potential in the state, we need to develop a home processing capability, if we are to have a

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Opportunities and problems anticipated in future agricultural production, marketing, and land use are not adequately dealt with by current state and local public policy.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

viable economical market at all.

Richard Turrell
Area Farmer- Oneonta, NY
Delhi Hearing

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I was speaking with our county Cooperative Extension agent recently, who had just met with some lawyers representing investors from out of the area. Out of curiousity the agent asked them why they were interested in buying land in the area. Their response was, "The people we work for are spending so much money on income tax that they can buy these farms, lose money on them, and actually make 19 percent on their investment."

This type of situation should not be allowed to exist when we see so many farms going out of business. We must work to correct such problems as the lack of markets for their products and provide profit margins that will pay producers to continue... We have done a tremendous job of teaching our farmers how to produce, but we have spent very little money marketing research.

Richard Turrell
Area Farmer - Oneonta, NY
Delhi Hearing

Programs should be created to develop geographic self-suffiency in small areas of the state to cut down transportation costs, provide greater freshness of food, and furnish a more secure income for local growers.

Mary Jo O'Donnell
Schoharie Valley Environmental
Conservation Association
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Research and development efforts have not been targeted to areas of critical need, such as improved marketing or improved efficiencies that would lower costs of production (e.g., the wine and grape industry). Need for a comprehensive and coordinated agricultural research agenda in New York State.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

State support is also needed to fund research and development efforts in agricultural diversification. Many parts of rural New York are heavily dependent on one or two agricultural enterprises which makes them vulnerable to shifts in the economy. State aid could fund demonstration projects to test both new crops and to try out technologies which utilize agricultural by-products. This could expand the farming base of localities and attract new agricultural processing facilities to the State as well.

Fredric Menz
Chairman of the St. Lawrence
County Planning Board
Canton Hearing

In agricultural practice, the costs of chemicals often exceed all other cash costs of producing a crop. In some cases, it may exceed the total per acre costs of production operations... Every effort and resource should be explored in examining and promoting viable and non-chemical farming methods. Personnel and facilities at Cornell, the experimental station at Geneva, and within the Dept. of Ag. and Markets should be apportioned for organic and natural method farming study and practice.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

We have done a little bit of research on the use of sewage sludge as a fertilizer in Plattsburgh... applying it to cropland and carefully measuring the results. I have not satisfactorily answered personal questions concerning the pathogenic consequences of consistent use, to the point where I could realistically recommend it. I really feel there are too many things we still don't know about the short and long-term effects of using sewage sludge as a fertilizer for me to get overly excited. I think we need to continue to study it... It may turn out to be a possible strategy for utilizing this waste product, but I'm still rather nervous about the whole situation.

Everett Thomas
Agronomist, William H. Miner
Agricultural Research Institute
Canton Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Improvements in production and management practices are not proceeding as rapidly and effectively as needed in order for farmers to remain competitive (e.g., the herd average of milk production in New york State is 12,500 pounds annually, while it could be 17,000. Also, it takes the average dairy farmer 30 months to bring a heifer to production, whereas the industry goal is 24 months).

- Foreign competition and competition from other states have successfully captured some of New York's markets, and provide a continuing challenge.

- Political recognition of and responsiveness to agricultural interests has been ambivalent. However, the potential for future farmer-rural nonfarmer alliances to influence decision making may be growing as the rural share of the state's population increases.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We are cautious to recommend programs which may stimulate production without fully evaluating marketing opportunities and the farmer's ability to make a profit... Production increases do not necessarily relate to profits or a healthy agricultural industry. In fact, successes of agriculture's production sector have on occasion led to surpluses, depressed prices, and lower net farm income.

Jack Hughes
Director of Governmental Relations
NYS Farm Bureau
Albany Hearing

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While the government does subsidize honey production, I can't produce honey for less than 50 cents per pound... the price right now on honey being imported into the United States is approximately 34 to 37 cents a pound. On the export side, if we try to ship honey into, say, Canada, China, or Japan, there is a tariff leveled against us. Any of these other countries can ship their products into the U.S. without paying a tariff... We can't compete with foreign prices.

Mr. Beecher
Beekeeper
Canandigua Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- High production/overhead costs in the agriculture industry relative to other industries, states, and countries. Both capital purchases and operating expenses in New York are well above the national averages. Real estate taxes, for instance, are among the highest in the nation. Also, New York farmers average the fifth highest monthly electricity bill in the nation.

- New York has a comparatively poor business climate, which is attributed to the high income tax on agribusiness relative to other states. Certain aspects of environmental regulation also affect the climate for agribusiness.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Farmers' land is overtaxed and overregulated. There exists an attitude of "the state's land", "the state's resources", and not the "citizens" land or the "citizens" resources. The state has not proven itself responsive by listening and acting in a fashion that would best benefit the farm community in New York State.

Edward Bauer
Steuben County
 Farm Bureau
Olean Hearing

Electricity is another large expense on many farms. We are concerned about the reallocation of hydroelectric power. The benefits to downstate would be minute, and the cost to us would be immense.

John Greenwood
Local Dairy Farmer-
Member, St. Lawrence
 County Farm Bureau
Canton Hearing

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One recent problem that has developed is in agriculture assessments through the agricultural districting program... the reduction in assessment due to agricultural land use has been effectively eliminated by assessors who have turned around and added that deduction to the buildings. The final assessment on the farm property is the same as before.

Richard Terrell
Area Farmer- Oneonta, NY
Delhi Hearing

We have found that the hardest agency to really work with, in the agricultural sector as a whole, is the Department of Environmental Conservation. It doesn't seem that many of the rules and regulations enforced by DEC are necessarily agriculturally oriented. This is an area of concern, and I think there should be a watch dog of some kind created to protect agricultural interests in the state.

Mr. Jerome
President, Ontario
 County Farm Bureau
Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Conflicts with non-farm community members exist concerning farm smells and sounds, use of chemicals, trespass, surface and subsurface water pollution, and use of farm equipment.

- A continuing preoccupation by the Federal government with several commodities grown primarily in other regions of the United States has put New york at a disadvantage with its own agricultural policies and programs.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

As the state comes to recognize the economic importance of its agricultural lands and to protect this resource from conversion to other uses, it will be necessary for the state to devise a means of reimbursing local governments for lost tax revenues resulting from agricultural tax abatements.

Fredric Menz
Chairman of the St. Lawrence
County Planning Board
Canton Hearing

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Farmers are installing waste storages, lagoons, and other systems where the material can be spread on the land or kept in the silo safely. We are advocating the safe use of the bare minimum of fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals to produce the desired crop.

Richard Brockman
Chairman, Montgomery Co.
Soil and Water
Conservation District

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Drainage, or lack thereof, should be identified as a weakness for New York agriculture. New York, like the rest of the Northeast, suffers a unique problem compared to the majority of our nation's agriculture: excess water. As the Midwest aquifers are pumped dry for irrigation, you will probably see a re-emphasis in the Northeast agriculture. National policy however, has determined drainage is a production practice, therefore, a very low priority in this day of excessive agricultural surpluses. At the local level, however, drainage should be the highest priority because it opens up whole new worlds of agricultural production (diversity) and allows for greater operating efficiencies... If New York is interested in promoting rural development and agriculture, we should look at replacing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Although New York State as a whole produces a wide variety of agricultural products, many sub-state areas, for example the Tug Hill region, lack agricultural diversity and therefore may be at risk economically.

- Harvested acreage has increased recently. However, we may be witnessing the statewide substitution of marginal agricultural land for prime, since most of the state's prime agricultural land is in urban fringe areas undergoing development.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

some of the federal technical and financial assistance we have lost in this area.

William Chamberlain
Chairman, Black River-St.
Lawrence Resource Conservation
and Development Council
Canton Hearing

Aggravating production and marketing of many of our major commodities are production-oriented national farm programs that encourage production without considering marketing. Government farm programs achieve production of relatively cheap food, but in doing so tend to create the problem of periodic oversupply and subsequent low prices for producers. National farm programs have also tended to foster agricultural development in areas of the country traditionally considered agricultural, such as the midwest and south and have not fostered opportunities in areas such as the northeast.

Jack Hughes
Director of Governmental Relations
NYS Farm Bureau
Albany Hearing

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On the issue of agricultural diversification, if we are going to encourage other ag-related enterprises, we have to develop the marketing capability for them... I know that pig farmers ship out their stock because there isn't a market in the state. The current tax structure is a big part of our problem... It costs people who are trying to do business in this state more than it does out of state... that's the bottom line.

Donna Burr
President, Schoharie County
Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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Increasingly,, we see more farm land being turned into either residential or development land and being taken out of food production. We feel this is an area of concern in view of New York State's increasing dependence on imported

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- The existing secondary and rural road and bridge system is declining across the state and needs to be maintained and upgraded since a modern, efficient transportation network is essential to the achievement of a competitive edge in all markets.

- Although farmers and farm organizations have access to many sources of capital, they are not widely aware of state and local sources of preferential interest monies that would aid basic agribusiness development.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

food... non-retention of farmland would become a very dangerous policy to pursue. We ask you to take a hard look at the current and continued use of agricultural land for agricultural purposes.

The use of agricultural districts is certainly a first good step in that direction, and I see widespread application of this practice in our county. I think it can go a long way toward preserving agriculture as one of the major industries in this county.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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One of the things we need to do in New York State is increase our capital spending in the direction of rebuilding our vital transportation infrastructure. The farm community supports the concept of a dedicated highway fund for this purpose... such a fund is used in 45 other states, and it would make good sense in New York State.

Donna Burr
President, Schoharie County
Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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In terms of financing production agriculture, we feel that there are adequate funds available now for farmers to get money to do whatever they have to do on their farms at current market rates. With production surpluses the way they are, we don't feel we can ask for low interest loans to try to increase production when we are already over-producing. We would support, however, aid targeted to increasing processing facilities in New York State.

John Greenwood
Local Dairy Farmer-
Member, St. Lawrence
County Farm Bureau
Canton Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Public misconceptions regarding agricultural practices and economics abound.	The increase in "value added" of agricultural products per employee is greatest for employees from the agricultural/business sector than it is for any other kind of business. I suggest to you that it proves the efficiency of agriculture and the farming community. My concern, however, is that while the rest of the industry and economy benefit from the "valued added' to the extremely low prices of agricultural products, the farmers themselves seem to be on the losing end of the profit game. Edward Bauer Steuben County Farm Bureau Olean Hearing
• The average age of farm operators in New York is 50, while the average age of all employed persons in the state is 39. There is concern the young farmer cannot get into the farm business.	
• Storage facilities for certain perishable products (such as potatoes, apples, cabbage, onions, and radishes) are limited, and the marketing period for these commodities is therefore shortened.	
• There is a continuing bias against career opportunities in agricultural production and marketing by school guidance counselors and students.	

Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Continue to maintain and enhance New York's land base for production of agricultural products.	As the primary agency responsible for the preservation of agricultural land, we support the Commission's efforts to develop a comprehensive approach to encouraging better management of our natural resources. Conservation and preservation of our agricultural crop land is a state policy expressed in the Constitution and in the Agricultural Districts Program. Kim Blot NYS Department of Ag. and Markets Albany Hearing All citizens benefit from agricultural research. For this reason, we recommend that research funds be increased above current levels to Cornell University, (including the Geneva Experiment Station). Technology is changing and advancing very rapidly and dramatically... continued research is needed to keep the New York agricultural industry competive in the market place. Kenneth E. Pollard Apple and Cherry Growers of New York State Canadaigua Hearing ********
• Expand and/or diversify production in order to meet new marketing opportunities.	While New York State's dairy industry continues to remain the dominant sector of agriculture in the Empire State, the diversity of our agriculture is a vital aspect of future growth within the farm industry. Our ability as a state to open new markets for what are currently considered minor agricultural crops may offer the greatest potential for future growth. But at the same time, we must maintain and work to expand our market for milk and milk products. Jack Hughes Director, Governmental Relations NYS Farm Bureau Albany Hearing ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Develop foreign and domestic markets for New York products. Place greater emphasis on New York State consumption of in-state production. Expand public and private promotion of New york State's agricultural products.

- Encourage innovative marketing and entrepreneurial activities in agriculture.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

On the subject of agriculture, the County Planning Board has three major concerns: marketing, diversification, and preservation of prime farm land. There is a critical need for state support to help market New York State products. Whether it be wine, cheese, maple syrup, or any number of other locally produced goods... we need to create an awareness both within and outside the state of the quality products we have to offer. New York could be instrumental in developing this awareness both by including agriculture in its promotional efforts (e.g. MADE IN NEW YORK NATURALLY), and by facilitating the distribution of New York State agricultural products within the state.

Fredric Menz
Chairman of the St. Lawrence
County Planning Board
Canton Hearing

In regard to the clearinghouse concept of marketing agricultural products, very clearly there is a potential in New York State to bridge the gap between our urban and rural areas. Some of the large urban areas have a large demand for special types of produce or specific products mainly imported from Europe or elsewhere abroad. Many of these things can be produced and marketed locally were there appropriate communication between the market place and the prodution industry. There are numerous possibilities for specialty products... I'm sure you've all read about the gentleman (in I believe it's the Catskills) who is growing foie gras with his ducks and geese down in the Catskills, and I believe New York State used to produce caviar at one time.

Mary Verlaque
Director of Planning
St. Lawrence Co. Planning Dept.
Canton Hearing

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The Preliminary Report on Agriculture repeatedly stresses the concern of the farm community, agribusiness, and government officials that greater attention needs to be given to the marketing and promotion of New York produced farm products. The New York Farm Bureau is in agreement that this concern must be given priority attention. It has become increasingly apparent that we have the capacity to increase food production, but problems associated with marketing and distribution must be addressed if

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Establish a comprehensive agenda for agriculture-related research and development in New York to include marketing, as well as breeding, pest control, production techniques, equipment, and storage.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

we are to have long term agricultural expansion in the Empire State.

New York State
Farm Bureau
Albany Hearing

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This is something which, for lack of a more accurate term, I will call high technology agriculture. I believe that New York State is in an excellent position to become a leader in the production of specialized agriculture products, products which are now largely imported to the State. I refer not only to storage and processing capabilities, such as in the production of kosher meat products (which are certainly tremendous opportunities), but also to the primary production of crops.

In the last three years, my area of the State has seen the introduction of a family farm consisting of a large greenhouse which produces hydroponically grown lettuce, primarily for the Montreal market. There are long-term plans to expand this operation... there are many similiar examples in this region. My point is that we should keep a close eye on these types of opportunities and encourage their development in New York State. What we have to do is to determine how this increasingly available high technology (relative to agriculture) can be positively harnessed by businessmen and entrepreneurs in New York State. Also, we must give thought to the training of a different type of "farmer" when such high technology agriculture is developed.

We will always require the traditional land-based agriculture (and the people who make it a reality) to meet the bulk of our food needs. Efforts to improve such agriculture are very worthwhile for all of us. But let us also take advantage of all that science is making available to us. We are in the middle of a very large market which is becoming increasingly demanding in variety and sophisticated in taste. New York State should

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Maximize utilization of the state's abandoned and marginal farmlands for such uses as pasture, forage production, and tree crops. Research has shown that it may cost less to rehabilitate certain lands than for the farmer to purchase new land ready for production.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

take advantage of these situations to utilize high-technology to accommodate these trends.

Fred Aufschlager
Clinton County Director
 of Planning
Canton Hearing

Extensive use of pesticides and other farm chemicals is causing uncounted problem situations with wells, ponds, streams, and other water supplies. The hazard of chemical poisoning to soil organisms, water ecology, wildlife habitat, and human health must be considered immediately and extensively.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

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Concerning the goal: "Maximize the utilization of the state's abandoned and marginal farmlands....", some clarifying comment is offered. Much of the state's abandoned farmland was barely suited for subsistence farming and was not suited for modern mechanized commercial agriculture... These lands were typically subject to severe soil erosion and contributed to sediment pollution.

The abandonment of these sites from crop production and the intensification of the modern commercially specialized farming on land in the prime and middle ranges (non-marginal), together with nature's resilience on the abandoned sites did much to restore a farm-to-forest ratio aiding in the reduction of sediment pollution and benefiting stream fisheries and wildlife habitats... The uses for abandoned/marginal farmland noted in the report as "pasture, forage production, and tree crops", are certainly reasonable when factors of locally site-specific soil capabilities and product marketing capabilities are applied. However, another recommended use for "abandoned" farmland is the location of residential or other non-agricultural developments... this would be recommended for consideration particularly if the soils of the abandoned land are not prime agricultural

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Increase student awareness of the New York State agriculture sector in public school systems.
- Increase state influence on federal food and agriculture policy.
- Encourage the continuation of a long tradition of family farms.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

soils and, if such sites would not directly conflict with the greater dynamics of adjacent commercial agricultural operations.

David Pendergast
N.Y.S. Soil and Water
Conservation Committee
Albany Hearing

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The general populace must be made to realize that we need really good, competent kids in agriculture. Whether it's on the farm itself, in formulating feeds, designing chemicals or whatever... We need good people. Part of the problem stems from a lack of reinforcement of agriculture/agribusiness in our educational systems.

Donna Burr
President, Schoharie County
Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Expand food processing, manufacturing, and storage facilities within the state.

- Improve New York consumers' understanding and support of a vital, efficient food and agricultural industry.

- Encourage a continuing dialogue among the segments of the food industry; identify common interests.

Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can public and private cooperation develop more effective marketing strategies? In

  particular, to:

    - Foster a continuing dialogue among components of the agricultural industry that is conducive to innovative marketing and entrepreneurial activities.

    - Research new products and marketing opportunities (e.g., metric packaging, unsalted butter, new varieties of barley for breweries, better adapted varieties of grapes for the New York wine industry, specialty items) to improve the competitiveness of New York State products.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Expand promotion of New York State agricultural products and public awareness of New York agriculture.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Many New York farmers would benefit from having information on more accessible markets open to them, and available sources of local markets (such as schools, hospitals, restaurants and other bulk purchasers). In turn, the community is served by knowing about the availability of fresh, locally grown produce,and prices are stabilized by having less waste in the fields.

A network should be established to keep track of N.Y. products and their regional access to available markets; as well as to encourage continued promotion of N.Y. products.

New York grown produce could be better identified on packaging, and information on N.Y. agriculture made available to consumers to inspire pride and association with N.Y. crops. Film strips and educational packets could be available to public schools, and other educational media offered on the processes and problems New York farmers face. The Dept. of Agiculture and Markets could take a larger role in supplying information to the public on farm products and issues.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

New York State should look into the feasibility of developing a seal of purity program for food products. Purity of products could be certified by a laboratory to be established by New York State. This could be a voluntary program for marketers to test domestic and imported products for compliance with current federal and state regulations. User fees would pay for this service... This seal could be applied to the product and then promoted to the consumer.

Kenneth E. Pollard
Apple and Cherry Growers
 of New York State
Canandaigua Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	**PUBLIC COMMENTARY**
Policy Questions (cont'd.)	
• How can conflict between agriculture and nonagricultural uses of rural land (e.g., nuisance complaints, use of chemicals, trespassing) be resolved or mitigated?	
• How can we foster an ongoing dialogue among agriculture and food production industries, and those state agencies that have an impact on them (e.g., Department of Environmental Conservation and State Board of Equalization and Assessment)?	
• Are there unanticipated, negative effects of commercial bank deregulation that should be addressed by public policy?	
• Can the prospects for beginning farmers, who face prohibitively high start-up costs and heavy debt payments, be improved?	
• How do we ensure the continued productivity of the land base?	
- Preservation of prime, unique, or important farmlands, especially in rapidly developing areas.	Most of our activities are directed towards working with farmers and their problems of erosion, sediment, and pollution. These people are concerned with the problems they may be creating, and are willing to resolve/prevent

- Provision of stronger incentives to keep land in farms where land is highly suited to agriculture.

- Encourage nonagricultural development on lands not suitable for agriculture.

them. At the same time, though, they inform us that in order to maintain a return on their investment and stay in business, they must sometimes forego the negative consequences. Their net return does not allow them to manage their resources as their long-term best interests dictate, forcing them to intensify their land use and postpone adequate treatment.

Many of these farmers are of the opinion that some Federal programs have helped to induce part of the problem. Many more acres of land could be used within effective capabilities and better treated, while setting aside those acres in need of rest periods.

Richard Brockman
Chairman, Montgomery Co.
Soil and Water
Conservation District

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Finally, the state has an important role to play in the preservation of prime farmland. Much valuable agricultural land is lost to urban development every year. There is a need to strengthen the Agriculutral Districts Law to provide better protection for existing farms. The state could also provide leadership and technical assistance to local governments in developing land use regulations which protect active farmland from conversion, and which encourage the development of marginal farmlands for related uses: forestry, pasture, etc..

As the state comes to recognize the economic importance of its agricultural lands and to protect this resource from conversion to other uses, it will be necessary for the state to devise a means of reimbursing local governments for lost tax revenues resulting form the agricultural tax abatements.

Fredric Menz
Chairman of the St. Lawrence
County Planning Board
Canton Hearing

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I'd like to see the state support agriculture on the whole. There should be greater efforts made to avoid confiscation of agricultural land

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- How do we encourage New York agricultural lands to be used for their highest value use? Is there a need for state-wide crop planning based on soil capability, future markets, climate, regional diversity, and other relevant factors to help farmers make crop decisions?

- Current tax and regulatory structure: do they impose undue hardship on various agricultural industries? Are there ways to reduce real property taxes on producers? To minimize bureaucratic "red tape" while continuing to serve the public interest?

- Where property development rights are removed from agricultural lands, how will landowners and local taxpayers be fairly compensated? How will the local tax base be protected?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

for highways, power lines, wetlands, and so forth, in cases where it can be avoided.

Donna Burr
President, Schoharie County
Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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The report also asks, "Is there a need for statewide crop planning?" I do not believe that there is... Farmers in New York will survive and be able to compete with other farmers from other states as long as we are not subjected to excessive regulation and control not faced by farmers in other states.

The real key to keeping and maintaining industry in New York is not low interest loans or short-term tax relief, but we must stop the excessive regulation and taxation policies. Once these areas are corrected, industry will stay in New York and new industries will come.

John Greenwood
Local Dairy Farmer-
Member, St. Lawrence
County Farm Bureau
Canton Hearing

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The Farm Bureau supports the agricultural district concept. However, it has proven to be a burden to some of the rural communities, because while in the process of relieving the farm taxes, it places a greater strain on the rest of the community.

Donna Burr
President, Schoharie County
Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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Clearly, New York State laws need to allow greater flexibility for the farmer, who may already be under considerable debt burden and financial pressures... these laws should recognize the importance of farmland to the

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

community's resource base, open space, agricultural contributions, and other benefits. A community which holds development rights will be able to guide and regulate the value and condition of its future... returning its worth many times over.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

While the exemption resulting from agricultural districting provides an incentive for farming to grow, the loss from the local tax base must be balanced by higher tax levies on neighboring residential and commericial properties. This problem is escalating as more farmers become eligible for the exemption.

Although exemptions provide incentives for agricultural investments and spare the farmer, the rapid shifting has resulted in development of an excessive tax burden on local non-farmers. We must realize that all New York State benefits from the preservation of agriculture and its related industries... the state constitution provides for the protection of agricultural lands. As part of this preservation effort, agricultural value exemptions, therefore, serve a public purpose, transcending purely local concerns. Subsidies for such purposes should come from a broader revenue source. Local governments have no control over the amount of agricultural exemptions granted or the distribution of the tax burden... the exemption program is a state program mandated to local government.

Wayne Hale
Orleans Co. Planning
 and Development
Nevele Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- Climate, soil, and marketing influences are diverse across New York State. How can agriculture policy, research, and practices recognize and capitalize on this variability in order to realize the full potential of New York? In addition, how can sufficient diversity be promoted within regions in order to provide greater regional economic stability?
- What policies and programs would contribute to greater technology/information transfer in areas of basic and applied research and management innovation in order to develop new markets and product lines, and to achieve lower costs of production in today's competitive environment?
- What should be the main focus of New York's agriculture? How do we rank related objectives, including: production of food and fiber, economic development, maintenance of adquate nutritional standards, provision of open space, air quality improvement, and other benefits?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We encourage improvement of our natural resource base through initiation of state-supported agricultural drainage projects. These projects are designed to offer agricultural landowners the opportunity to improve the productive capacity of their wetter soils, thereby improving its growing capacity... drainage improvements can lead not only to increased economic activity in traditional agricultural production areas, but can also lead to creation of a more diverse mix of agricultural products. The increased diversity allows farmers greater flexibility in adapting to relatively rapid changes in the market place.

Kim Blot
NYS Department of
Ag. and Markets
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Can New York State develop an effective, computerized ag. and natural resource marketing system? Would such a system be capable of placing New York in a more competitive position with out-of-state and foreign markets?

- How can the loss of processing and manufacturing firms from New York State to other states be reversed?

Environment, Land Use, and Natural Resources

Over 75 percent of the land area in the state is rural. We are faced, however, with a government that gives the benefit of representation to the people rather than to the land, so we find that a great number of our political decisions are often influenced by other more urban areas. I am particularly concerned with the issue of scale, which is an important consideration in talking about anything that is rural.

Tom Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
and Development
Delhi Hearing

Symposium Workshop Participants

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Assemblyman Richard I. Coombe

Resource Person:

Gordon A. Enk
President, Gordon A. Enk
& Associates

Facilitator:

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Ivan Vamos
Deputy Commissioner for Planning and Operations
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

Perry White
Secretary
Delaware County Planning Board

Steven Wolfgram
Executive Vice President
Empire State Forest Products Association

Introduction

State and local efforts to keep air, water, and land clean in New York State and elsewhere across the nation have grown in intensity. Public concern over environmental quality, and protection of natural and cultural resources, public health and safety, has moved to the forefront over the past decade in new and increasingly strong ways. Scenic beauty, air, water, and soil quality, farmland, forest, wildlife, and cultural resources are major strengths identified in rural New York.

Most recently, the vulnerability of our natural environment to man-made pollution has been made highly visible by events such as dioxin contamination in Missouri and landfills contaminated with toxic waste at Love Canal. Local citizens' groups, who are normally very permissive when it comes to the needs of industry, are now raising a crescendo of protest over the disposal of toxic wastes. Other forms of pollution also threaten us. Acid precipitation, for example, is insidious, and the evidence is strong that it damages some rural resources, although the extent of these effects is still unclear.

There is also a growing interest in water quality and supply. In the future, New York State's abundant water supply may be as important to its economic health as petroleum is today for certain other states. Because rural areas represent 75 percent of the state's land area and have relatively low population density, they have served as ready dumping grounds for a disproportionate share of New York's toxic and hazardous contaminants. These threaten public and private subsurface water supplies upon which the rural population is heavily dependent for its economic vitality, health, and general welfare.

Currently, New York State's vast forest resources (consisting of over 18 million acres or about 60 percent of the state's land area) are greatly underutilized and opportunities exist which may stimulate dynamic economic benefit for certain rural localities. However, much of this resource base is privately owned, therefore, policymakers must consider this situation when developing strategies aimed at stimulating the best possible use of this resource. The creation of incentives for mutually beneficial public-private cooperation will be essential.

Also, the percentage of land in has declined overall across the state during the past thirty years, even though the total acres harvested has increased somewhat during the past decade. In some instances the nearness of large metropolitan markets has probably contributed to increases in acreage devoted to high value cash crops, despite the pressure to be converted to other uses.

Solid waste disposal continues to be a difficult problem for muncipalities across the state. Greater utilization of new technologies (e.g., resource recovery facilities) may offset some of the pressure caused by land burial, but more attention needs to be given to this issue since there is concern that rural New York may be seen as a likely "dumping ground" for overflowing municipal waste.

A major goal suggested is to encourage positive efforts that will protect ground, air, soil, and water from contamination by waste disposal. Moreover, timber and recreational potential of forests should be enhanced, as well as the state's scenic and cultural resources.

Clearly, a concerted undertaking by many diverse interests will be required in order to accomplish these aims. The momentum behind the population and economic shifts occurring across New York State, if sustained, will be a powerful influence to consider when shaping public policy responses. Continued monitoring of current trends by policymakers, academic, and private interests is crucial. Information gathering and policy initiatives necessary to enhance natural resources management practices also must be encouraged. In addition, levels and availability of up-to-date technical assistance must be enhanced, in order to provide pertinent information needed for management decisions at the local level. The state, in its dealings with local governments, should strive to shift away from a master/controller orientation to that of a partner/enabler.

A key public policy issue is how state and local governments will achieve sound management of environmental, land, and natural resources as the state develops. A related issue is how public and private cooperation in these efforts will be enhanced, along with the realistic delegation and sharing of responsibility. Such management efforts will make significant contributions to both the quality of life throughout the state and the economic vitality of rural New York.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends and Assumptions

- Strong rural and urban desire for environmental quality continues to exist. Growth of "Not in My Backyard" syndrome or organized local opposition to large public projects, e.g., waste storage or treatment facilities in rural areas.

- Increase in demands on local officials to handle technical resource management problems.

- Diversification of energy sources.

- Increasing use of rural areas for recreation by those living in metropolitan areas. For example, in one rural county (Delaware) nonresident landowners increased from 15 to 50 percent of all landowners between 1950 and 1983.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We do not have a hazardous waste recycling plant, nor do we want a site here. Of course, we do produce the wastes, but I must confess to a little bit of a cop-out on that... it's a wonderful idea, but it should be in somebody else's county, not mine.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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One of the critical concerns of the NYSSWCC is that top priority be given to enhance the ability of the resource managers and technicians at the local level to deliver hands-on services directly at the local resource base for local implementation. The local delivery of technical conservation service is essential.

David Pendergast
New York State Soil & Water
Conservation Committee
Albany Hearing

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According to the Appendix, in 1981 New York State derived only 14.1% of its fuel from within the state. Private efforts to develop renewable energy sources should be encouraged. Likewise, extensive research and energy conservation should be promoted. The extent to which the government should be directly involved in these efforts must be evaluated in light of the economic efficiency of the free market system.

Alan L. Button
Auburn Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Increase in quality of surface water resources as a result of water pollution controls and private initiatives, although the rate of improvement has slowed.

- Stabilization in viable agriculture and forest acreage following a long period of marginal agricultural land abandonment. Much of this marginal agricultural land has reverted to forest.

- Growth in urban land area and in rural land area affected by urban influences.

- Continued irreversible loss or deterioration of certain natural and economic resources, e.g., groundwater resources, prime or unique agricultural lands, recreational areas.

- Cumulative increase in amounts of chemical, fly ash, and solid wastes being preferentially stored in rural areas.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- Scenic beauty: a very important determinant of the quality of life in rural New York. It is also a key factor in the economic vitality of rural areas.
- Abundance and high quality of water; traditional sources of surface water pollution largely under control.
- Diversified land use and economy.
- Soil base for agriculture and forestry.
- Widespread and diversified agriculture.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

It is noteworthy that the conclusions reached in several of the sessions were in agreement that the quality of rural life and the economy of rural areas is highly dependent on effective management of natural resources and land use as well as on protection of the quality of the environment. Several groups, for example, referred to the outstanding scenic values of rural New York, on which the tourism and recreation economy is dependent.

Drayton Grant
Deputy Commissioner
NYSDEC
Albany Hearing

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SPDES, combined with the extensive facilities construction programs have brought us a long way towards achieving a "drinkable, fishable, swimmable" water quality objective. Yet, as your report points out, we are not there yet and we certainly cannot reduce our vigilance... The quantity of available water is also something that can no longer be taken for granted. Recent droughts have been short-lived and, therefore, relatively painless water conservation strategies have carried us through temporary water shortages. However, not to plan for an extended shortage would be foolish and short-sighted.

Drayton Grant
Deputy Commissioner
NYSDEC
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Resilience of ecosystems.

- Human resources - heightened public desire for environmental quality, cadre of professional resource managers, a great tradition of natural resource institutions.

- Extensive areas of forest comprising over 18 million acres, or about 60 percent of the state.

- Variety of both fresh and salt water commercial and recreational fisheries.

- Stabilization of fish and wildlife resources following long period of recovery from earlier abuses.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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As the report notes, the environment is remarkably resilient and the success of further thoughtful efforts is virtually guaranteed. There is a danger, of course, that our recent accomplishments will provoke within us an unwise complacency. The rapid advance of technology, the accumulation of past indiscretions, and the increasing interdependence of each subpart of our society make informed and aggressive planning more essential now than ever before.

Alan L. Button
Auburn Hearing

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Local Governments who want assistance with land use planning have trained, experienced personnel at their disposal. Our Office of Local Government Services has a team of highly regarded land use specialists who are especially sensitive to rural communities. Through our extensive training programs, this resource is available to local governments throughout the State.

Gail Schaffer
Secretary of State
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Toxic and hazardous waste disposal. Current generation is an estimated 1.36 million tons of hazardous waste exceeds current disposal capacity by an estimated 400,000 to 700,000 tons a year. In addition, there are approximately 750 sites identified to date in New York State where hazardous wastes have been dumped over the years.

- Potential for rural areas to be a dumping grounds for metropolitan areas (e.g., about 40 percent of the hazardous waste sites identified in New York are located in rural counties, although only about 18 percent of New York's annual hazardous waste production is generated in these counties).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Toxic waste generation has been a problem not only in this particular county, but regionwide. And as you may recall, NYSDEC made a proposal two years ago that involved locating a site for hazardous waste processing... one of the sites suggested was in the northern part of this county on the shores of Lake Ontario. And at that particular time, they were suggesting the site house a facility which would serve pretty much the entire state of New York and would involve all different types of hazardous waste processing.

We were concerned about a couple of things. We felt the location could have some very serious environmental consequences if it were picked. Also, concern centered on the development of a single site to handle all waste treatment as we felt a more sensible way of doing it might be to locate regional-type facilities, designed to take into account the types of wastes generated in those particular areas. It's still the feeling of people from counties within the area that a regional approach makes more sense than trying to handle the problem with one single statewide facility.

James Carr
Director, Cayuga County
Planning Board
Auburn Hearing

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Water and land resources are the rural areas most valuable resource and help form the foundation upon which rests most of New York State's business, industry, and agriculture.

Once contaminated, our groundwater and soils may be spoiled for a generation or more, and that is a heavy burden for our children to bear. Dumps, or sanitary landfills have hidden costs in terms of the neighboring citizens' health, the terrible monetary expense of trying to reclaim food and aquifers, and loss of dollar values of surrounding property. Rural New York may become a dumping ground for urban areas.

L. R. Matson
Town of Rochester
Nevele Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Rural growth continues to be largely undirected by local communities (e.g., the vast majority of rural localities have not enacted land use policies that would guide their overall development).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Environmental laws should also be enforced much more regularly than they are enforced now. We've had a situation in this county with the so-called midnight dumper, where a person was actually putting toxic wastes into the ground, literally at midnight or during the darkness of the night. When that was discovered, it was cleaned up only at great expense to the surrounding areas... fortunately, we were able to go back and make that individual pay for that. It appears that through the Department of Environmental Conservation, we need a much more rigorous enforcement of environmental quality. These people are causing great havoc with our precious natural resources.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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Land development pressures fluctuate and occur in cycles to some extent. A long-term resource objective should be to maintain a viable farmland/farming operations base with which to produce food for the Northeast well into the 21st century.

Incentives to locate development on lands which are marginal-to-poor for agriculture should be encouraged both educationally and in the implementation of local, county, state, and federal project reviews and approvals. Methods of making farming enterprises more profitable, thereby fostering positive economic reasons for stabilizing productive lands in farms should be pursued. Further, the means to mitigate adverse impacts to farm operations as a result of noncompatible intrusions should be upgraded to foster improved coexistence (e.g., less acreage removed from production by encouraging construction of residential condominiums instead of more acreage removed by parcelization for extensive and numerous individual home sites; encouraging the type road right-of-way improvements which use the six acres of marginal land at the end of the farm, instead of the six acres in the center of the farm causing its severance).

David Pendergast
New York State Soil & Water
Conservation Committee
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- History of urban orientation in planning for the state's development. The tendency has been to treat the rural environment, natural resources, and land use and rural interests as being of secondary consideration:

  - Need to encourage greater environmental awareness in the state community.

- Subsurface water threatened by toxic and hazardous contaminants. Inadequate understanding of the location, quality, and quantity of these water resources.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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I believe that successful efforts in the realm of the environment, land use, and natural resources will require substantial cooperation throughout the state. The issues raised in this arena are not uniquely rural concerns. We must all acknowledge that our quality of life, wherever we live or work, is inextricably and fundamentally linked to the environment and our natural resources.

Alan Button
Auburn Hearing

We are very much interested in the transmission of energy throughout the County and the state, whether these are above or below ground. We believe that these transmission lines (especially those to conduct energy through the County, etc. from its source to beyond our boundaries where it is to be used), should be placed adjacent to each other in corridors for such use. Gas, oil, and electrical lines should be located and installed in a manner that would not drastically interfere with the surrounding land uses and resources.

Richard Brockman
Chairman, Montgomery
 County Soil & Water
Conservation District

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Is the analysis of the drinking water comprehensive enough as it should be today? Of all the services provided by the state, that is the one I believe that made sense to centralize. Not even our larger counties can afford the type of equipment necessary for comprehensive testing, nor the personnel required to operate that equipment.

In those areas where there was reason to believe samples should be taken, but they were not, rural areas have suffered... samples often were delayed and sometimes not tested at all. In some instances we even got the reply, "What are you going to do with the results once you get them..."How are you going to interpret them if you don't have standards?" It seemed as if we

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- The 1983 Clean Water goals of the Federal Clean Water Act have not been met due to delays in funding and approval of advanced waste treatment projects, acid precipitation, combined sewer overflows, and toxic substances.

- Undermanaged public and private forest resources. Trees on many sites are mature or approaching maturity; poletimber and sawtimber acreage increased from under 7 million acres in 1968 to nearly 10.8 million acres in 1980. Most forests could be improved for a variety of uses by stand improvement or harvesting activities.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

were being told that it's better not to get the information at all, than receive it and not know how to deal with a situation. We feel that's totally irrational... We ought to know what the problems are. Well water contamination in rural areas is a serious problem.

Jim Feuss
Cortland County
Auburn Hearing

The impact of poisons in our water system is much too great to be neglected any longer. Both study and action in this area should begin at once. Equal responsibility must be taken by the Dept. of Health, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, and Dept. of Ag & Markets, while getting participation and cooperation from Ag. Extension offices. The Dept. of Agriculture should also begin to consider more organic, and less chemically dependent farming methods. Introduction of safe biological controls for pests and crop problems need to be investigated seriously.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

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One of the areas of water quality concern that bothers us is sewage disposal. Along the Bouquette River for instance, there are five or six hamlets which because of the concentration of settlement, predominance of clay soils and shallow soils, small lots, and so forth, become pockets of stream pollution. I would like to see them cleaned up, but the existing state and federal system just isn't geared up to solve these kinds of problems.

William Johnston
Essex County Planner
Troy Hearing

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The state's diversified forest land, as the Commission's Environmental Preliminary Report points out, is a resource that is greatly underutilized. This resource, more than any other, offers the greatest opportunities for

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Insufficient economic base in rural areas and funding at the state level to finance management of natural resources and environment.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

the future economic development of rural New York State. At present, the strength of our large quantity of forest land is overshadowed by the many problems that exist. The lack of primary and secondary wood using industries, and the lack of markets for low grade wood and whole tree chips are major problems resulting in the non-management and underutilization of our forest resource. The rising cost and taxation of forest land threatens to make ownership, for forest management purposes, a very costly and unprofitable proposition.

Other problems threatening the forest resource are the unknown effects of acid precipitation, mounting harrassment by the Adirondack Park Agency towards the forest industry, and the negative public image of the forest industry that this breeds. These problems all deserve the consideration of the State Legislature to insure that the forest industry continues to be a vital part of our economy.

Joseph Kutsko
St. Lawrence County Forester
Canton Hearing

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We must realize that safeguarding our environment for the future carries a price from yesterday as well as today. Where the expense for safeguarding tomorrow's productive resource base is beyond the reasonable and timely financial capability of the present owner/operator of such a resource, assistance for long-term measures should be directly provided. In short, the state should foster realistically long-term stewardship of the productive components of the resource base by the public/consumers and the owners/producers, while providing technical and financial incentives for implementation. A soil and water conservation cost-share program for New York State to utilize in cooperation with rural farmland operators would be beneficial and could fill the gap created by federal declines in cost-sharing.

David Pendergast
New York State Soil & Water
Conservation Committee
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Insufficient information base for assessment, planning, and management of many of New York's natural resources (e.g., quality, extent, and location of groundwater resources; land use trends and changes in the land market; long-term effects of chronic, low-level air pollution on the productivity of rural New York's wealth of natural resources).

- Fish populations in sensitive regions of the Adirondacks continue to be reduced or depleted by stream acidification. In addition, although levels of mercury, PCB's, and DDT have declined overall in New York's freshwater fish, monitoring has been limited and several exceptions to these trends exist. Levels of some known contaminants, such as Mirex, are not declining. Furthermore, many other compounds that potentially pose a health risk have not been studied.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

As for the report before this Commission today, I can say nothing except to the extent of observing that while it regards forestry to be part of agriculture, there is little in the way of statistical information about the magnitude of the forest industry as an economic activity in New York.

Craig Gilborn
Director, Adirondack
Museum, Blue Mt. Lake, NY
Canton Hearing

In a meeting sponsored by the State Health Department, several environmental health directors met and discussed that concern over what appears to be a handful of consistently present chemicals, which may not show up in standard analyses of drinking water supplies... We are requesting the State Health Department to prepare a handbook or listing for county units describing what these materials and hazards are, how the actual consumer should view the situation, and what kind of information should be disseminated locally to educate the public on these particular organic chemicals and gas derivitives.

Thaddeus Medrek
Environmental Health Director
Cayuga County Health Department
Auburn Hearing

Goals For Rural New York

- Adequately protect ground, air, soil, and water from contamination caused by disposal of solid, hazardous, and toxic wastes. Address generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of wastes and consider rural community needs.

  - Encourage the proper handling and recycling of wastes, and stimulate markets for those wastes which can be recycled.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Acid rain, pesticide residues, and the disposal of hazardous wastes are problems shared by all New Yorkers, especially those in rural areas. Often upstate land becomes a depository of such wastes.

This office will continue to take action against the dumping of highly toxic chemicals in order to assure rural New Yorkers a safe and healthy environment. Those who mishandle or improperly dispose of pesticides will find themselves the subject of criminal prosecutions.

The problem of acid rain continues to threaten the economy of rural New York. In addition to having a dramatic effect on several amphibious species in lakes, ponds, and streams in the Adirondacks, acid rain can damage plant life, accelerate erosion, and affect the establishment of seedlings.

Karen Mankes
Assistant Attorney General
Agricultural & Rural Affairs
NYS Department of Law
Albany Hearing

Our young people must be made keenly aware and concerned with all aspects of environmental control. This Commission would do well to encourage the coordination of programs between our schools and the Cooperative Extension Service.

William Deming
Rural Schools Program
Cornell University
Auburn Hearing

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I really don't know what we would do if we had to find a place after our Brunswick landfill closes up. We'd be in bad shape. We understand Washington County is getting an ANSWERS project going, and is talking to communities in Vermont, in efforts to fulfill their tonnage requirements and provide enough energy to sustain their operation... the cost of physically transporting the wastes might be prohibitive for us.

Austin McGrath
Supervisor, Town
of Grafton
Troy Hearing

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We have a very large county here, and we have 33 landfills which do not meet Part 360 state requirements and are under threat of closure. In fact, most of them have signed consent orders with the Department of Environmental Conservation. The Planning Board some five years ago was given the task of trying to recommend options to the towns for muncipal solid waste disposal. It came up with the suggestion that we ought to look at energy recovery, resource recovery, as it were. There is interest in this concept of using a local problem, (e.g., solid waste) and turning it into a benefit to the public through heating of institutions like prisons and mental health facilities.

A problem for us is certainly the distances involved, and we have to see if the cost of the end result is going to be affordable. We are in a difficult situation, however, because our only alternative to resource recovery is centralized landfilling. So, the transportation problem is with us regardless.

Mary Verlaque
St. Lawrence Planning
Department- St. Lawrence
County Solid Waste Authority
Canton Hearing

We are much concerned with activities in our throw-away society. Much of our so-called waste should be recycled. This county is presently operating two solid waste landfills. They have been in operation for 10 years and they will be full in 5 years. Burying our waste may be the best way of disposal, but it takes land and no-one wants to be near one. Much of that so-called waste could be reused, economical ways must be found to reuse it.

Richard Brookman
Chairman, Montgomery
County Soil & Water
Conservation District

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Encourage industry to reduce hazardous waste production through substitution of less hazardous and non-hazardous material in manufacturing processes, and changing actual manufacturing processes.

- Educate the public on the handling of toxic wastes in the home.

- Address deficiencies in hazardous waste treatment capacity.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

While refuse disposal is carefully regulated in municipal areas, the same cannot be said for rural areas. Environmental pollution caused by poorly managed resources should also be supervised and minimized even if it does mean regulation over rural home owners and agriculture itself, as well as related agribusiness enterprise.

Thaddeus Medrek
Environmental Health Director
Cayuga County Health Department
Auburn Hearing

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We have to do something about toxic waste... My own personal feeling is that those who develop toxic substances shouldn't let them out of the factory until they develop an antidote or some means of handling these substances... the chemist needs to come up with some of these solutions.

Donna Burr
President, Schoharie
County Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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I went to a DEC meeting on water quality once, and one of the problems brought up was the issue of disposal of gallon jugs that have residual spray materials in them. The response to this was, "Do what it says on the bottle." Well, it says on the bottle "Dispose of properly," ... They didn't have a solution.

Donna Burr
President, Schoharie
County Farm Bureau
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

  - Ensure safe storage of hazardous and non-recyclable wastes where storage is presently the only means to handle these.

- Enhance and protect the quantity and quality of surface and subsurface water resources.
  - More aggressively protect subsurface waters from contamination, since aquifers are virtually impossible to purify once contaminated. Groundwater is the source of drinking water for an estimated 34 percent of New York's population, and for an estimated 61 percent of the population in rural counties of the state.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The NYSSWCC supports the inclusion of "ground" and "soil" in the goal: "Adequately protect ground, air, soil, and water from contamination caused by disposal of solid, hazardous, and toxic wastes." It is important that the ground and soil be recognized as natural resources in need of safeguards against contamination. The ground and soil are overdue for the equitable protection which their natural resource use and status deserve.

David Pendergast
New York State Soil & Water
 Conservation Committee
Albany Hearing

The funding for environmental quality testing is difficult for the local communities to obtain. If there's a series of water tests needed, it might be 10, 20, or even $50,000 to determine where the source of a certain pollutant might be... our small local governments can't afford that. The nature and extent of testing (and subsequent cost) needed for landfills might be about the same and for large and small communities alike... it's an unfair burden that we have to bear.

L. R. Matson
Town of Rochester
Nevele Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Continue to clean up surface waters, recognizing that it is seldom possible to realize pristine conditions. Address rural community sewage treatment, taking into consideration federal funding cutbacks and the need for technologies appropriate for rural localities.

• Enhance and protect the land resource base of rural New York for long-term productive utilization.

- Discourage unclean, wasteful use of prime and unique land resources. For example, discourage conversion to urban development of prime and unique agricultural lands of state and local importance by fostering a viable agricultural economy.

- Develop the timber and recreational potential of forests while assuring and protecting their long-range sustained productivity and health.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Our land is presently endangered by various trends, including growth of corporate ownership, unplanned development, increased pollution, construction of roads, power plants, transmission lines, et cetera, on prime farm land. Since land is a finite resource for which there is infinite competition, it is urgent that New York State support land use policies which will preserve this rural wealth. Only land not suitable for cultivation should be taken for other purposes. There should be some way of controlling this.

Mary Jo O'Donnell
Schoharie Valley Environmental
Conservation Association
Albany Hearing

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It is time for New York State to set real goals for the wise use and promotion of our forest resource. A proper atmosphere needs to be created to encourage the forest industry to remain or relocate in this state. The poor logging practices of the past have often been the result of poor or non-existent markets for low grade forest products. The promotion of wood as an energy source should be a major goal of the State Legislature. All state institutions in rural areas could provide markets for low grade wood. These state facilities would be working examples to private institutions considering a similar conversion from expensive imported energy to the untapped energy source of locally grown wood.

Other goals worth pursuing are a fair forest tax law which will encourage local ownership and the long term management of forest land. Also, the APA needs to recognize the importance of the forest industry to this region, and work with, not against, that industry's efforts to survive. The fear of not knowing what is going to happen to the resource is a major factor preventing our forest products industry from expanding in the Adirondacks.

Joseph Kutsko
St. Lawrence County Forester
Canton Hearing

I think that more could be done with the private lands that are not in large land holdings. A lot of private land, smaller 10 to 100 acre holdings, are not really being managed, and this is an area where I think some progress in the economic development sector could be made... There should be a better utilization of these smaller private land parcels.

William Johnston
Essex County Planning Department
Troy Hearing

Forest resources will contribute more to the rural economy if we can increase processing and manufacturing of wood grown in the state. This work is helping the state to retain and expand various wood processing industries, including paper plants.

Drayton Grant
Deputy Commissioner
NYSDEC
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Reduce soil erosion state-wide; expand soil moisture control programs for agricultural land.

- Develop energy sources in both environmentally and economically sound manner. Ensure adequate, affordable, dependable supplies of energy by emphasizing
  - energy conservation,
  - renewable energy sources,

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Following loss of land in farms, New York's most serious land problem is soil erosion. Erosion greatly reduces crop yields and productive value of land in many areas. It is estimated by the N.Y. Soil and Water Conservation Committee (Framework 1981) that 4 1/2 million tons of eroded soil reach identifiable streams in New York each year. The loss of soil on crop land alone is believed to be 45 million tons. The Soil Conservation Service's, N.Y.'s Vanishing Farmland estimates that with current rates of erosion, New York will lose the productive capacity of an additional 300,000 acres of cropland by the year 2000.

Gordon Helman
Sierra Club
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- in-state sources of energy,

- diversity of energy sources.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There is abundant forest land and other land resources available in the state to supply a large portion of our rural energy needs through wood chips. It has been proven that we can utilize, but not deplete, these valuable resources. By environmentally thinning woodland, we increase the value of the timber while utilizing the thinned material as wood chips. Idle land and waste land could be planted to tree species that can also be utilized for wood chips. This would provide an income for the landowners on lands that don't produce a crop presently, as well as greatly increasing the value of a timber crop for future years. The buying and selling of wood chips would reduce the dollars spent for energy (wood chips cost about one-fifth of oil for one million BTU's) and also keep those dollars in the local economy and provide for more local employment. However, the resource we speak of is not New York's resource; it is the resource owned by a vast number of rural landowners and state taxpayers. If we are to succeed in making this resource available, we must communicate with these people and inform them of ways to intelligently use their holdings to improve their economic position without destruction to the environment.

David R. Tetor
The NYS Grange, Committee
on Alternative Energy
Albany Hearing

Energy costs have affected us quite a bit, with both fuel oil and electricity continually climbing. Although, as you know, fuel oil has gone down in the last year or so. When we had the energy crunch several years ago, most of our people turned to woodburning. As you notice, we have a lot of forested land in our town, and a lot of people make use of their own wood lots and so forth. As a result, oil costs haven't affected us quite as much, but certainly electrical costs have.

Ken Davies
Supervisor, Town of
Saranac, Clinton County
Canton Hearing

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A note on cogeneration, because this, again, is something that we are very, very concerned

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Enhance, protect, and manage scenic resources in New York State.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

about. If there could be some way to find a mechanism so that the rates paid to cogenerated electricity could be equitable— I know we have thrown out the 6 cent rate. If there could be something done about that, we could perhaps come some way towards supplementing our hydropower with other types of electrically generated power.

Mary Verlaque
St. Lawrence Planning
Department- St. Lawrence
County Solid Waste Authority
Canton Hearing

One thing I would classify under the infrastructure of rural New York is energy. We have become very accustomed to almost a self-reliance upon energy across the northern region; and the movement that recently disavowed the 6% minimum for locally produced energy I think will set us back a great deal in restoring some of the hydroplants, especially, those that were in existence 40 or 50 years ago.

James King
Director, Technical Assistance
Center, SUNY Plattsburgh
Canton Hearing

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County planning directors from the North Country communities have been working to try to find development strategies for the Adirondack hamlets. We believe that this whole idea of rural New York needs to be understood that what is rural in northern New York is different from what is rural in the Catskills or rural in western New York. We are trying to look at ways to provide for development, but development in a way that will not undermine the greatest resource, the scenic beauty of the area. A lot of attention has been placed on the environmental uniqueness of the Adirondack park, and how the environment needs to be protected

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Assure adequate levels of technical and financial assistance for communities in dealing with environmentally-related problems:

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

but not enough emphasis has been placed in the past on the other resources of the area, the people.

Mary verlaque
St. Lawrence Planning
Department- St. Lawrence
County Solid Waste Authority
Canton Hearing

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Developing local solutions to groundwater problems requires much more expertise and funding than what individual villages, hamlets, towns, villages, and small cities have at their disposal. State agencies are seriously undermanned in terms of certain fields of expertise... many fields have become increasingly important in recent years, with DEC, DOT, the State Geological Survey, and health departments needing more geologists, hydrologists, hydrogeologists, and engineers to answer local demands.

Many people in local, rural communities don't know where to go for help. Some of the agencies, such as the State Geological Survey, could utilize professionals as liaisons, providing technical assistance (e.g., recommending tests that would be needed to check for contaminated water).

L. R. Matson
Town of Rochester
Nevele Hearing

One area of pollution that we feel is not being adequately addressed is the disposal of human waste from residences in the rural areas. We would be interested in providing technical services to rural residences if we had the financial resources to acquire the needed expertise. Some entity of government should have this expertise so that on-site assistance could be made available.

Richard Brookman
Chairman, Montgomery
County Soil & Water
Conservation District

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Especially in the environmental quality field, rural residents are nearly forgotten by New York State. While cities enjoy federal and state regulation and subsidy for providing public water supplies and municipal sewage treatment, the rural resident is on his own. County health department efforts to regulate municipal water supply and sewer treatment works are subsidized by the New York State Health Department, however; county units are not subsidized for assisting rural residents to manage private water supplies or sewage disposal systems. Just at this moment the hamlet of Summerhill is in a crisis wherein several families have badly contaminated well water, but there is no form of state aid or subsidy to help them.

Thaddeus Medrek
Environmental Health Director
Cayuga County Health Dept.
Auburn Hearing

Just this year, the New York State Health Department budget deleted the Central New York State laboratory. This placed a great burden on small businesses and municipalities that are mandated to have water analyses done regularly, but the New York State Health Department and County Health Department are no longer able to provide the laboratory services. Large municipal facilities are able to have their own laboratory, but small rural facilities are unable to do so.

A budgeting mechanism should be developed, wherein on a per capita basis, equal Health Department resources can be applied to private water supply and sewage treatment. Private water supply and sewage disposal should not be a local option... We believe state resources should be available to rural communities to regulate environmental pollution in general. We firmly believe that these are minimal measures that should be taken to correct the long-term neglect suffered by rural New York.

Thaddeus Medrek
Environmental Health Director
Cayuga County Health Department
Auburn Hearing

We have been getting a lot of requests from private individuals to test springs and private wells for water quality in addition to the public systems. Our department provides a

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- provide greater flexibility in community development of environmental community facilities.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

technical advisory service to home owners to go out and inspect their individual well or spring and evaluate it. Our county laboratory does bacterial analysis, but we find there is an increasing number of inquiries to check the water for chemicals or fertilizer contaminants that our current laboratory cannot handle. We can only provide a list of large commercial environmental labs and tell them, "The information you want is available, but probably very expensive." Unless we feel that there is a definite hazard to their well, we suggest that they may not need to bear the cost of testing their water.

The problem in this area is, if you happen to be serviced by a public water system, you can get all kinds of protection. However, there is no assistance for individual home owners with private supplies.

Thaddeus Medrek
Environmental Health Director
Cayuga County Health Department
Auburn Hearing

The County relies almost entirely on the state Environmental Conservation Department through the Syracuse Regional Office. We feel that our waste management problems are well handled by that agency. We are not so sure that on the local level, anyone is really watching small operators activity in the rural areas... here is where we need someone locally to monitor the area's water supply.

Thaddeus Medrek
Environmental Health Director
Cayuga County Health Department
Auburn Hearing

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We have two villages in the county, which at one time were under State Health Department mandate to provide sanitary sewer facilities and treatment, but simply could not afford a sewer system and waste water treatment plant as defined by statewide regulations. In one instance our department was able to promote the concept that each individual home owner should update his septic system to stop surface overflow. We have done a good enough clean-up job that the stream pollution isn't occurring, but it's stop gap, because many home owners have

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Protect fish and wildlife resources; encourage their enhanced use.
    - Arrive at a balance between wildlife production and damage to agriculture and forest regeneration caused by wildlife.
    - Encourage continued development of recreational and commercial fisheries by addressing problems related to chemical contamination.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

inadequate land for septic systems that would last in the long run.

Thaddeus Medrek
Environmental Health Director
Cayuga County Health Department
Auburn Hearing

Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How do we achieve comprehensive management of farmland, forest, water, air, fish, and wildlife resources as the state develops? How do we develop a long-range strategy that will:

    - reinforce the strengths and mitigate the weaknesses in New York's environment in keeping with a clear, focused vision of what that rural environment should be;

    - identify agricultural lands, scenic acres, and other resources of local, regional, or state-wide importance in both an economic and qualitative sense?

    - achieve continuity in natural resource management;

    - realize the potentials of undermanaged resources;

    - shift from a reactive stance to an anticipatory one?

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• How may public and private cooperation in natural resource management and land use be fostered and enhanced?	Rural planning is a matter of continuing interest to us. We must improve the state-local partnership in this area if we are to achieve our goals of a quality environment and a sound economy... Existing State and local authority should be applied in a more focused manner to accomplish management objectives on a priority basis. Drayton Grant Deputy Commissioner NYSDEC Albany Hearing ********
• How do we more fully achieve regional, intergovernmental cooperation and logical delegations of responsibility for resource management?	We must recognize the fundamental fact that the people who own/operate/produce from the private rural resource base are ultimately the managers of that resource base, and (as noted in the Legislative Commission's report on local government) that rural citizens generally, posess a "common-sense" approach to problem solving and that "county government has hands-on expertise". Regional intergovernmental cooperation can perhaps best contribute to resource management including: 1) During the development of regional initiatives, identify and design them according to inter-regional (i.e. local) diversities, 2) foster the "partner/enabler" concept for inter-governmental cooperation, and 3) encourage the direct sharing of ideas and approaches to similar problems among localities (i.e. seek out those with the hands-on experience for a particular issue and share the experiences with those who need it). David Pendergast New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee Albany Hearing I find some progress is being made in cooperative efforts among different agencies to meet local community facility needs. However, conflict situations can arise and often compound frustrations on the local level. From our personal experiences, in trying to develop a community sewage system, we ran into technical/legal complications...to make a long story short, we did have problems meeting the requirements of the EPA. We couldn't get funding from EPA at the time. A system was designed which bent the regulations a little bit, with the assistance of the State Health Department and DEC, but it had to take somebody

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- How do we ensure that local governments have the technical base to manage resources over which they have jurisdiction? How can the capabilities of local land and resource managers be more fully developed?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

from the inside to motivate them to say, "Technically this regulation is really not applicable in this particular situation."

Farmers' Home Administration came to our aid and provided a 50 percent grant and 50 percent loan for our project. The state Department of Environmental Conservation did grant waivers of certain sections after a tremendous amount of local effort in digging out the information to justify the need for them. I find it rather interesting that some ten years later, after tremendous local hardship and frustration to get the job done properly, our effort is now recognized by the state and federal governments as a demonstration of innovative technology. They have probably spent more money studying and writing reports on our project than we spent building it. The point is that efforts have to be made locally, with regulatory agencies striving to seek ways to accomodate and meet the demands of communities in need.

Jim Feuss
Director, Cortland Co.
Health Department
Auburn Hearing

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Capabilities of resource technicians begin with pre-employment educational training. They are then developed through the hands-on system of work-learn-and improve. Capabilities of all technicians can and should be continually developed through adequate financial resources which permit timely participation at: 1) refresher seminars, 2) seminars to keep current with technological developments and; 3) joint seminars between disciplines to share in understanding of the broad interrelationships of the management of the components of the state's natural resources base. Such training, however, should maintain a focus that is clearly relevant to the natural physiographic resource regions of New York State and their inherent diversities, rather than be dominated by theoretical discussion based on broad national regimes of natural resource regions.

David Pendergast
New York State Soil & Water
Conservation Committee
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can we improve the information base upon which resource management and policy making is based?
- How can the desire to stabilize agricultural acreage be realized in the face of constant land development pressures?
- How should siting of hazardous waste facilities be handled? Is regional placement preferable to development of a single statewide facility?
- How do we solve the issue of promoting cogeneration while requiring the maintenance of peak-load capacity (mandating utilities to provide all the electricity that might be demanded in a given moment, while trying to pay people for what is, in effect, excess energy)?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of continuing support for, and upgrading of, the capabilities of counties and the state through strengthening county Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the agricultural branch of county Cooperative Extension.

Kim Blot
NYS Department of
Ag. and Markets
Albany Hearing

Transportation

Rural life has been idealized and it has been the subject of kidding for a couple of centuries. Perhaps because rural life is construed to be simple, even by those who experience it, most everyone thinks that the problems of New York's rural population are simple and manageable – a matter for example, of repairing rural roads and the consolidation of services, so they more closely resemble the kinds of amenities found in cities and urban areas.

Craig Gilborn
Director
Adirondack Museum
Canton Hearing

A sparse population base and great distances increase costs, and a small population means less money available because there is less population for fewer victims. Government funding sources tend to excuse their lack of aid as being cost-effective per capita. However, they should not penalize victims who have to remain victims because they prefer rural lifestyles.

Bobbi Doupe
Counselor-Coordinator
Delaware Opportunities Safe
Against Violence
Delhi Hearing

Symposium Workshop Participants

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Assemblyman William L. Parment

Resource Person:

Alice Kidder
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Syracuse University

Facilitator:

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Local Government Analyst
New York State Senate Research Services

Recorder:

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Participants

Donald F. Bishop, II
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Superintendent of Highways, Town of Rockland Highway Department

Mitchell P. Pally
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Wesley T. Payne
Chairman, Ontario County Board of Supervisors

Gary Weidman
Highway Superintendent, Wyoming County

Margaret Williams
Director, Madison County Office For the Aging

Introduction

Transportation is vital to the future development of rural New York. It enhances the economy, improves productivity, and provides personal access to essential human services. In addition, transportation has greatly influenced the pattern of rural development and settlement throughout New York State's history. The current physical transportation network includes an extensive road network, rail lines, waterways, ports, airports, and terminal facilities.

Shifting demographic and economic patterns call for a thorough review of the existing transportation network, with an eye on improving commercial access (e.g., accomodating larger vehicles on rural roads), and personal mobility. Establishment of new linkages to existing transportation corridors, as well as greater emphasis on road and bridge maintenance are vital to all of New York. The guarantee of mobility to rural residents is a major public policy issue that requires increased state and local coordination and effort. This finding has been reinforced repeatedly in the Commission hearing process. The development of effective balance in the state's transportation modal mix should be a major concern to policymakers in the state as the enhancement of those modes which have deteriorated over time (rail, waterways, and smaller airports), but are still capable of providing greater benefit to the state economy, is essential to future economic development. Additionally, it will be crucial to transportation functionality that multi-modal terminal facilities be strategically located and adequately maintained.

Present trends in telecommunication technology will complement, or possibly even compete with existing transportation modes. Conceivably, an increasing number of people will not need to travel as much as they do now in order to engage in certain business or personal activities. Energy costs will play a major role in the overall picture for transportation in rural areas, and should be considered in public policy decisions.

The future effectiveness of transportation in rural New York will hinge upon the ability and initiative of both the public and private sectors to improve the means for cost-effective delivery of goods and services, as well as increased personal mobility. At present, the current road system built through a federal, state, and local government partnership, is the dominant force in rural transportation. It is expected that this will remain the primary mode for the near future. There is a need, however, for better coordination between state and local governments to assess transportation infrastructure conditions and set priorities on a regional basis.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS Trends and Assumptions	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Increased demands on local planners.	Changes in residential and economic development patterns have created a need for re-evaluation, and possible modification of existing transportation infrastructure in New York State. David Kaufman Sullivan County Board of Supervisors Monticello Hearing ********
• Switch in road emphasis from building to maintenance.	In urban areas there has been a recent change in emphasis from building roads to maintaining roads; however, in the rural environment, the primary emphasis has always been maintenance. This situation has caused highway problems to worsen as resources have not been available for maintenance purposes. New York State Department of Transportation Kingston Hearing ********
• Increased size and weight of vehicles (farm equipment and motor carrier vehicles).	I can verify the trends you have indicated in relation to increases in the size and weight of both farm equipment and motor carrier vehicles. I'm sure that most people are aware that this is a trend that will keep going because the Federal Government is actively working to standardize all the laws dealing with interstate transportation because of the variances between the states. The rural areas are disadvantaged because the road network is not well prepared for this area. William Davenport Traffic Specialist Consolidated Freightways Corp. Jamestown Hearing
	It has now become widely recognized that many rural roads and bridges are no longer adequate and, in fact, were not designed to handle the increased traffic flow and higher weight trucks now used on our roads and bridges. Kim Blot Rural Affairs Specialist NYS Dept. of Ag. and Markets Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Reduction in purchasing power of money for road maintenance.

- Growth of regional transportation hubs.

- Deregulation and debate over possible re-regulation.

- Growth of regional markets.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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I think our local highway departments are doing miracles with the limited resources that they have. Indeed, these roads vary in quality, depending on the geographic area. Overall, I don't see any major problems with their condition, but there are individual sections which may need further attention. I think the greatest problem is with the bridges and this is where we get into serious issues.

Herbert Heckler
Ulster County Planner
Kingston Hearing

We have been able to maintain a rail system in the County, only because the County itself purchased it... There are industries that use the rail system quite extensively, and because of the impact the system has had on local jobs, the county felt it was to the betterment of the community to purchase the system rather than lose it. They made the initial purchase, but it's currently operating under its own budget.

Richard Jerome
President, Ontario Co.
 Farm Bureau
Canandaigua Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends (cont'd.)

- Increase in piggyback usage out of urban hubs (currently the extent of rural participation in this trend is unknown).

- Increased risk of liability to municipalities.

- Growth of multi-modal approaches to providing transportation.

- Telecommunications as an aid to, but also competitor to, transportation.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Strengths and Assets	
• Well-developed road network.	In your report, under "Strengths and Assets" there is reference made to a "well developed road network" in New York State. My response to this statement is that road quality varies greatly throughout the state. New York's secondary roads, for residential travel purposes, are generally in very good condition and are very well kept... For commercial traffic purposes, however, these roads are inadequate. I think there is a lot of work to be done in rural areas to upgrade our roads for commercial traffic, especially in the Southern Tier section of the state, as well as the Northern part of New York, above Utica. These road networks leave a lot to be desired. William Davenport Traffic Specialist Consolidated Freightways Corp. Jamestown Hearing ********
• Geographic advantage of location: east-west corridors; possibility of greater development of a north-south traffic flow.	We are presently concerned about the study under way for a high speed rail between New York City and Montreal. We note that one of the proposed routes is up the east shore of Lake Champlain through Vermont. We don't understand this. It would seem to us that the existing right-of-way through the North Country could be upgraded rather than developing a new right-of-way through Vermont. William Murphy Rensselaer County Executive Troy Hearing
• Responsive maintenance forces.	
• Land space which is already accessible through rural road systems.	
• Professional cadre at State Department of Transportation.	

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Service providers (reasonably good air service to rural areas or to urban hubs serving rural areas; well-developed motor carrier industry; resurgence of Conrail through capital investment and new management approaches; availability of intercity bus; in some areas, a social service mobility network; regional rail carriers (which have filled in to some extent, on Conrail abandonments).

- System of local government which can be held accountable for provision of service.

- Options provided by a multimodal network connecting urban and rural users: rail, water, air, as well as highways.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Some aspects of the transportation infrastructure may be overdeveloped from the standpoint of shifting economic use, inability of local governments to maintain the asset, and lack of future potential.
    - Some very unused rural roads might well be left to be maintained by private interests;
    - Shifting industry needs leave certain rail lines unprofitable and subject to abandonment, unless community support is found;
    - Low usage of intercity buses may result in abandonments of service in some areas;
    - Declines in use of the more remote rural airports.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There are numerous Town roads in Sullivan County which are seasonally closed, but which require major spring reshaping and constant summer and fall care and which are strictly "convenience" roads. Some could very well be turned back for private year-round maintenance. Slight changes in the Highway Law as well as additional input from local planning boards in acceptance of dedicated highways in new developments could be put off or avoided entirely under proper circumstances rather than being forced on the taxpayer as an additional burden.

Charles Meyer
Sullivan County Commissioner
of Public Works
Monticello Hearing

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We have been lucky enough to maintain a rail system in our area, even though portions of it may not be entirely self-supporting... I heard of a recent study regarding the recurrence of the energy crises... this is far from surprising, but it does point out that we have sort of fallen asleep on our energy policy. Certainly, rail capability should be an integral part of any effective energy strategy. I think rural areas in particular, with the bulky stuff they may be potentially shipping in and out (lumber, minerals, etc.) have a greater stake in maintaining rail systems as a viable transportation alternative.

Mayo Snyder
Cortland County Planner
Auburn Hearing

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D&F Transit is heavly involved in the rural transportation of passengers serving on one hand Jamestown, N.Y., and on the other hand Rochester, N.Y. Many areas served on our regular route would be without any form of transportation without bus service.

During the past four to five years the number of passengers that use our service has increased dramatically due to the frequency of trips in each direction. There is no doubt in my mind that Section 18 funding has contributed to the continuation of frequent service and has helped

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Need to reassess existing road networks in order to more effectively address the shifting residential demographic condition (and subsequently changing needs) of the state.

- Increasing needs among the transportation disadvantaged to get to social services, nutrition programs, and special education. Currently, waste and duplication may exist in individual social service agency budgets trying to cope with the problem.

- Difficulties encountered by the local planning process as it tries to differentiate its delivery service from that of an urban-dominated strategy:

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

us to develop added service as the public demand has risen. The cooperation of county government is critical to our success and without it I fear our transit efforts would be going backward.

J. T. Swanson
President, D&F Transit, Inc.
Jamestown Hearing

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There may have been some shortsightedness in development of the interstate system, in that potentially important linkages may have been left out (the Auburns and Ithacas)... It may be necessary to extend the System in some areas (as in the case of Route 13). Cortland was lucky because it happened to be between Binghamton and Syracuse and became part of the interstate system. Ithaca and Auburn were not so fortunate, however, and I would say that the economic development of these areas were negatively impacted because of this.

Mayo Snyder
Cortland County Planner
Auburn Hearing

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There's a great need to coordinate planning and use of transportation dollars. State agencies who are involved in transportation should be convened to develop strategies, legislation, and procedures which would ensure coordination. Also the group would design and test innovative programs aimed at increasing accessibility and efficiency of transportation services... The transportation problem in rural areas is serious and requires coordinated action by both the Legislature and the executive agencies of New York State government.

Stockton Clark
Director
RASP-NYS Office for the Aging
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Weaknesses (cont'd.)	
- Fixed-route, regular schedule bus service may be totally inappropriate for solving special mobility problems;	I agree that fixed-route regular schedule bus service is often inappropriate for solving many rural special mobility problems. The private sector in rural New York can provide this accessibility through specialized transportation, given the training and financial subsidy that is so necessary. Eleanor Beardsley Chairperson Board of the Transportation Project for Cayuga County Auburn Hearing ********
- Federal and state highway building standards may require more extravagant approaches to highway maintenance and capital building than are necessary;	Federal and State standards and liability trends both tend to exaggerate costs of maintenance and construction. Court awards to erring motorists and passengers based on "poor road design", "insufficient signing", "narrow bridges", "improper guide rails" have led both counties and towns to spend millions of unnecessary dollars just to provide a roadway or bridge which meet all acceptable standards and hopefully, which afford the municipality some protection from liability. Standards which require 5 foot shoulders on each side of the pavement or 1000' of guide rail on a bridge approach are certainly ideal but highly impractical in many rural areas. Charles Meyer Sullivan County Commissioner of Public Works Monticello Hearing We fully believe that an effective highway system is the major factor in developing and stimulating economic growth in rural communities. We feel that a good and progressive highway system is the least costly and yields the greatest return for the residents of the area. One factor that must be realized by state planners is that in these changing times facilities must be designed and built for the needs of the area. The State always seems to design a Taj Mahal when a less expensive structure would suffice. William Davenport Traffic Specialist Consolidated Freightways Corp. Jamestown Hearing
- Lack of available funds to enable professionals at the New York State Department of Transportation to gather data on the condition of local roads.	

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Lack of support for long-term investment in coordination of mobility programs, which could facilitate cost-effective use of available resources;

- Liability trends which impose undue burden on local governments for providing road access and safety, especially during inclement weather;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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There is very little public transportation in Delaware County. Services are located a considerable distance away from the dispersed population. Families and individuals without personal transportation simply have no alternative. Although human and social service agencies provide transportation for clients, such service is costly and poorly understood by various federal and state funding sources. The limited availability of funds from federal and state programs creates higher per-unit-of-service costs because of transportation requirements. The delivery of home meals is limited in Delaware County to a radius of three miles from the senior meals sites, in effect discriminating against more rural residents due to lack of funding. Since funding formulas do not take transportation costs into consideration, areas of more concentrated population can more effectively serve needy populations... It would seem that some kind of funding which would provide for the coordination of social services transportation would make a lot more sense.

John Eberhard
Executive Director
Delaware Opportunities, Inc.
Delhi Hearing

I feel that the public school bus resources could be put to greater use. We have vehicles that are used twice a day that could be used, theoretically at least, for transportation of the elderly or other groups to meet their mobility needs. Since these resources are the result of taxpayer contribution, we should have flexibility for utilizing community resources.

Tom Briggs
Delaware Co. Office
 for the Aging
Delhi Hearing

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Highway safety is an extremely important issue and concern of the rural community since highways are the principal, if not only, means of mobility and access. How well the roads function relates directly to the physical and mental health of the local populace. Any

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Decision making which takes place outside of rural areas which nevertheless controls the development of transportation in those rural areas.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

consideration on the uses of rural resources for transportation must have the highways as top priority.

In 1982, approximately 268,000 reportable motor vehicle accidents occurred in New York with seventy percent of those occurring on the 93,000+ miles of local streets and roads; resulting in an accident rate 3.5 times the State Highway accident rate. Forty percent of all accidents and sixty percent of all fatal accidents occur in the rural environment resulting in a 1982 economic loss of $1.27 billion to the rural economy. In addition almost twenty-five percent (approx. 20,000 miles) of rural highways in New York are unpaved. These facts point to a serious need to better emphasize increased highway safety and apply new resources to improving the highways within our state rural areas.

New York State Department
of Transportation
Kingston Hearing

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Our main concern should have been trying to connect Buffalo to Olean, or Elmira. These areas promote and generate business within the state of New York, but in the past seem to have been neglected. We build roads away from our state, rather than facilitating local economic activity through comprehensive road networks....We build inter-changes and arterials around the larger metropolitan areas (which are needed to move people and to move traffic efficiently). Unfortunately, while concentrating on these efforts, we tend to forget the rural areas.

William Davenport
Traffic Specialist
Consolidated Freightways Corp.
Jamestown Hearing

We feel that State planning agencies have an inherent practice of developing and then postponing its projects. Something must be done to co-ordinate the planning with legislation in order to keep New York State, especially rural areas, competitive in the market place. The Rt. 60 Association feels that a concerted effort by residents, manufacturers, legislatures and the state D.O.T. is essential

- Poor road condition in economically important, but lightly traveled road systems:

if New York wishes to maintain its competitive environment while striving to induce industry.

William Davenport
Traffic Specialist
Consolidated Freightways Corp.
Jamestown Hearing

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A key transportation issue is the question of maintaining and improving our existing network of roads and rail lines. It is the finding of the County Planning Board that there is a need for better coordination between the State Department of Transportation, counties and localities in both planning and executing road improvements. There appear to be inefficiencies in purchasing equipment and materials. It also seems that the state's priorities for road maintenance and improvement do not always mesh well with local needs. In particular, we are concerned about the idea of abandonment of certain "remote" roads and bridges. While some of these roads may not seem important from a state perspective, they can be essential to continuation of many rural activities such as milk shipments, travel of school buses, etc... The state should consult with localities before considering any road abandonments.

Frederic Menz
Director, St. Lawrence
 County Planning Board
Canton Hearing

Road maintenance in rural areas should be a priority. An example of need for funding is the condition of Route 60 between Jamestown and Fredonia, a main north south artery that is heavily traveled but forgotten in major road improvement studies.

J. T. Swanson
President, D&F Transit, Inc.
Jamestown Hearing

The status of transportation infrastructure in rural areas hinders beneficial economic development. The roads in the rural areas are just not what they are in more populated areas. The lack of appropriate structural features may serve to deter industry from locating in rural

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Concern that the condition of transportation infrastructure in rural New York may negatively impact its economic opportunity.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

areas...It's definitely a drawback.

Paul Osenni
Sullivan County Planning Board
Monticello Hearing

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We have a very serious public transportation problem and this tends to impact us in many ways. It prevents personal mobility; the ability to get to a job if one doesn't have other means of transportation, and it affects the college. It affects the entire economic situation here in the county.

David Kaufman
Supervisor
Town of Thompson
Monticello Hearing

There are significant barriers to economic growth in Tompkins County, especially in the area of communication and transportation accessibility. We do not have a high speed or a dedicated corridor to an interstate.

Robert Schwarting
Acting Executive Director, Tompkins
Area Development Corporation
Auburn Hearing

We feel that certain areas of rural New York, have been neglected more than others, when state monies and planning have been developed in the past. We feel that Southwestern New York, especially Chautauqua County, has been neglected for years. Without proper and economical roads rural communities cannot effectively move into the twenty-first century. When state planners restructure transportation networks, they must seek out and incorporate the needs of the local communities they impact upon... studying traffic flows, industrial growth, etc... generally striving to maintain continuity of the region, while promoting commerce within New York State.

William Davenport
Traffic Specialist
Consolidated Freightways
Jamestown Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Uneven quality of the professionals responsible for transportation infrastructure in rural areas; nonuniform standards; lack of uniformity of credentials.
- Poor intermodal connections which would benefit rural system users: bus terminals not adjacent to rail stations; congestion at piggyback ramps, inadequate investment in port facilities. Even though the corrective action must be taken in urban areas, the rural areas will benefit.
- Uncertainties surrounding deregulation: data to date show no major problems from motor carrier or airline deregulation, but concern for the future monitoring of it was expressed.
- Lack of public education on the subject of transportation alternatives.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Companies first look at transportation costs in developmental decisions... What is it going to cost to get goods in and out?... In our case, roads were not built towards our markets, but rather, away from the state.

William Davenport
Traffic Specialist
Consolidated Freightways Corp.
Jamestown Post-Journal 12/1/83

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Inadequate bridges: conflict between aging capital stock and increased weight of vehicles and loads given new technologies in trucking and farming; incomplete understanding of which bridges are or should be weight-posted; selective, inconsistent attitude toward enforcement of load limits.

- Diversion of funds from transportation to other social purposes in local budgets (here the problem was noted, but there was disagreement on its significance).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Inadequate bridges are indeed a problem to rural transportation and while increased efficiency in larger concrete ready mix trucks, tri-axle feed trucks and tractor trailer logging rigs contributes to the economic growth of rural business, both bridges and roads bear the telltale marks of this growth. Even the combination of federal, state and local funding is unable to keep abreast of the decay and inadequacy of bridges built before tandem rear axle trucks were even dreamed of.

County Bridge Engineers and State D.O.T. inspection of structures over certain span widths have helped to identify problems and provide engineered weight postings, but funding is lacking for proper repair and replacement. Priorities have been set, but both politics and the fixed-income taxpayer have taken their toll on funding mechanisms. Enforcement of speed limits and weight restrictions is next to impossible by law enforcement personnel already overburdened by increased crime and inflationary costs.

Charles Meyer
Sullivan County Commissioner
of Public Works
Monticello Hearing

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In a recent Scenic Roads study conducted by the Task Force in the Hudson Valley Region, we found that the reduction in highway budgets for maintenance has caused a general degradation of the scenic qualities of the studied roads... Highway maintenance must be given a higher priority than it has been in the past.

Loretta Simon
Task Force for the Hudson
River Valley, Inc.
Kingston Hearing

Another uphill battle is at the local funding level. Since highway programs are not mandated programs, a trend in the shifting of available funds to social programs has occurred and must be counteracted. The highway is the lifeblood of the rural community and must begin to be viewed from that perspective.

New York State Department
of Transportation
Kingston Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Lack of public transportation (here the problem was noted, but there was disagreement on the extent to which the state had any responsibility to provide for personal mobility in rural areas).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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It goes without saying that the best program, the most nutritious food, the greatest health care means nothing without accessibility. There is a portion of the population that cannot provide transportation for themselves... Waste and duplication can exist in individual social service agency budgets but if one agency handles transportation for all other agencies in each rural county, efficiency and effectiveness will increase.

Eleanor Beardsley
Chairperson, Transportation
Project for Cayuga County
Auburn Hearing

The real problem, from the the community college point of view, is the great lack of public transportation and the people who need our help most in many cases simply have no convenient way of getting to the institution. They can't get to us, but when we try to check out the prices of perhaps trying to get them to us, it's not even remotely conceivable. It's outlandish.

John Walter
Sullivan County Community College
Monticello Hearing

Mobility and quality of life in the rural areas go hand in hand, and the cost of autos and fuel in the last ten years has had a very serious impact on both. I think we desperately need an alternative to the auto that can service our outlying towns.

In other parts of the country and the state bus companies have been able to survive... If the government just stayed out of the way, we might be able to be successful in the transportation area.

Richard Lanza
Chairman
Sullivan Co. Private
Industry Council
Monticello Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Use of obsolete or non-cost effective technologies:
  - Base-recycling technology could reduce road maintenance costs;
  - Duplication and wasteful approaches to social service transportation.
  - Timely repair saves the "hidden tax" of higher motor carrier operating costs;
  - Shipper ignorance of the possible advantages of intermodal moves;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There's nothing that says rural residents can't be mobile except they can't afford a vehicle... They can't afford to license them on fixed incomes. It's just one repetition after another that has a sort of a domino effect.

Ms. Joslin
Resident land owner
Troy Hearing

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Although much technology is available through D.O.T. Community Assistance Engineers, Cornell Highway Schools, the State, private industry seminars and workshops and county and town cooperation, not all town, or for that matter, county highway superintendents are willing to take time from an elected 2-year, low paying position to update methods, improve productivity and reduce costs. Closer cooperation and communication on inter- and intra-County is needed to dispense information, share successes and failures and provide specialized equipment.

Charles Meyer
Sullivan County Commissioner
of Public Works
Monticello Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Existing disparities between local jurisdiction, in proportion to the percentage of local budgets spent on transportation (e.g., rural areas may spend a larger percentage of their budgets on road maintenance):
    - Concern that attention given to state roads may be at the expense of local road maintenance.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We have a small section of road where there are three sawmills, a feed mill, a school and the rest of the business section. The whole village depends on the road, and it's in very, very bad shape. There is really not enough money to fix it up, in fact there is no way a small village can command sufficient resources to repair the road adequately.

David Raimey
Mayor, Village of Symrna
Delhi Hearing

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My own concern is that, while all these funds are being poured into state roads and necessarily so, if we're going to continue the economic development that has begun here in the last five years, then the local road structure must receive more attention. I have 330 miles of county highways, and about double that number of local township highways in this particular county, and my gut feeling is approximately 25 percent of them are in seriously poor condition, yet we do not have the adequate funds to deal with the problem.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Inappropriate funding mechanisms:
  - CHIPS formula based on centerline miles and population;
  - Categorical funding from federal and state sources which can lead to irrational choices;
  - Lack of incentives for cost-containment;
  - Overlooking public investment in ports where return on investment in the long-run may be good.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The CHIP's program, based on centerline miles and population, is not realistic. In order to qualify for funds to improve our local roads, the width requirements must conform to unreasonable standards. In most of our area, a thirty-three foot wide road would be impossible to build, and would be quite unnecessary for our local traffic patterns.

Eric Nissen
Sullivan County
Highway Superintendant

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Threat of rail abandonments which would result in adverse community impact. Possible loss of intercity bus service where needed.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I would like to see some action taken to try and preserve the viability of our rail systems. We have allowed them to deteriorate, and in many instances, the railbeds fall into other categories of use. I think that is a loss that cannot be replaced in the future.

James King
Director, Technical Assistance
Center, SUNY- Plattsburgh
Canton Hearing

We have been able to maintain our area rail system only because the county itself purchased it... There are three industries that use the rail system quite extensively, and because of the impact the system has had on local jobs, the county felt it was to the benefit of the community to buy up the system rather than lose it. They made the initial purchase, but it's operating under its own budget.

Mr. Jerome
President, Ontario Co.
Farm Bureau
Canandaigua Hearing

Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• State D.O.T. should be responsible for periodic inventory of the entire road system to ascertain condition, and make comparative regional analysis.	New York State D.O.T. should be responsible for a periodic inventory of the entire state road system, in order to ascertain condition and make comparative regional analysis. One strategy might be to develop some type of pact or agreement where the local communities would do the preliminary work and send periodic reports to the state, describing the condition of the roads and their thoughts on them. If the state disagreed with those reports they could selectively send staff out to review the data and conditions themselves. William Davenport Traffic Specialist Consolidated Freightways Corp. Jamestown Hearing ********
• There was an intense debate which could not be resolved over whether there should be a minimum standard of mobility to ensure that rural residents have access to social services, shopping, etc. Many felt this would be prohibitively expensive; others felt that a commitment to a minimum standard was necessary to provide an equitable community access.	There is a long-standing need for adequate transportation services for rural residents. Because of dispersed geographic locations and a relatively small population base, it is usually not profitable to provide regular bus or rail service for rural people. In St. Lawrence County the problem is two-fold: it is difficult to find convenient public transportation in and out of the county; and it is almost impossible to travel within the county without a private vehicle. Mobility can be every bit as critical in terms of obtaining employment and having access to necessary services for rural residents as it is for city dwellers. The State should seriously consider providing subsidies for rural transportation services in much the same way as it has historically provided such subsidies to urban mass transit systems. Frederic Menz Director, St. Lawrence County Planning Board Canton Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	As noted in the Commission's Preliminary Report on Transportation, personal mobility is of urgent concern to New York's rural counties. It is the key to access. Family Planning Advocates supports the concept of a minimum standard of personal mobility, as referred to in the report. Health care resources, where they exist in rural areas, are not truly available unless people can get to them. Probably a flexible, public transportation system, different from fixed-schedule, urban models should be developed. Shirley Gordon Executive Director, Family Planning Advocates of NYS Canadaigua Hearing
	********
• Introduce strategic planning where longer funding cycles could permit long-term planning and construction geared to life cycle replacement; there is a need to prioritize on the basis of greatest use and poorest condition of the infrastructure.	One thing that New York State does, and has done for years in developing long-range plans for transportation infrastructure, is overbuild. They'll set up a project and want it to last for thirty or fourty years, when it may only need to last ten years and with proper maintenance, might last twenty years. And I think where they should look towards cutting construction cost down is by not building these Taj Mahals. Going a little bit less expensive and putting the money into maintenance affords more flexible control from year to year and would cut down on designing time, contract times, and total cost. William Davenport Traffic Specialist Consolidated Freightways Corp. Jamestown Hearing
	********
• Upgrade ports to make maximum cost-effective use of port and water facilities.	Waterfronts such as those of the Hudson, St. Lawrence, and Great Lakes are important resources that must be revitalized, enhanced and maintained. It is also necessary to ensure that public access is developed and maintained along

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Help railroads to be profitable and rebuild where traffic and technology warrant.
- Complete enforcement of weight limits.
- Training to sharpen skills for local officials so that they can make wise allocation of funds for road and bridge maintenance, understand options, and provide feedback to monitor the system.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

these waterways.

Sally [illegible]zaralla
Dutchess County
Planning Board
Nevelle Hearing

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The quality of transportation infrastructure has had a dramatic and positive impact upon [illegible] development in this region, as shown by the economic growth in this area following the completion of the Northway limited-access highway. The added development opportunities that would be arise in the future, with the development of a parallel rail corridor (similar to the Northway), would be substantial.

Joseph C. Burke
President
SUC at Plattsburgh
Canton Hearing

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I noted that the Rural Transportation in New York State Preliminary Report identified increased size and weight of vehicles as a trend in rural New York State. The Division of State Police has a 62-member detail dedicated to the enforcement of vehicle dimension and weight regulations and thus this year is directly responsive to the idea which has been identified as a goal for rural New York.

Donald Chesworth
Superintendent, New
York State Police
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Develop greater awareness of the importance of small airport services to the state and local community.

- Exploit economies of scale in the organization and deployment of public maintenance at the local level (some districts are too small).

- Create efficient intermodal interfaces.

- Sharing of cost of "feeder" road network between different levels of government.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Access to the National Air Transportation System, even if not provided by scheduled air service, has consistently been demonstrated to be one of the most important factors in attracting and sustaining economic development. The tremendous growth of corporate aircraft use (now the fastest growing segment of aviation), as well as, the use of privately owned aircraft for business purposes, is often ignored or not fully appreciated, for its positive effects on the community. I feel that the State of New York, with its technical expertise in its Aviation Bureau of the Department of Transportation, should take the first step in actively offering assistance, to those communities which need it, and not wait to be asked. I am certain that many of these communities, especially those without full-time airport managers, are not even aware that no-strings assistance is available. It would be a sad loss of an existing resource, to watch these airports deteriorate because the community did not fully understand their importance.

William M. Connor, A.A.E.
President, New York Airport
Manager's Association Inc.
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Encourage more education and informational exchange for local citizenry and, additionally, the introduction of up-to-date transportation options into both junior high and high school curricula.

- Encourage greater commercial as well as recreational use of inland water systems (including definite upgrading of the New York State Barge Canal which is long overdue).

- Repair producer to consumer market roads where economically defensible.

Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Guaranteeing mobility to rural residents (open debate). At the hearing which concluded the Symposium, some State legislators were in agreement that transportation-disadvantaged people be provided access to vital services. Specifically, they felt any absence of personal mobility for senior citizens in rural areas should be addressed.

- Continue CHIPS formula or replace it with priority funding of maintenance on the economically justified roads (workshop group leans heavily toward latter, with DOT making study as preliminary step).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The experience of the protection and advocacy program and the Commission substantiates the Legislative Commission's findings on the essential role that the transportation system plays in the provision of essential human services. In the report on transportation it is recognized that the transportation needs of the elderly must be resolved. I would urge the Legislative Commission to also consider the transportation needs of individuals with handicapping conditions (referring to wheel chair accessibility on buses, vans, etc.).

We can not over-emphasize to you the importance of transportation, for what good is any kind of program if you can't get the people to it.

Irene Platt
NYS Commission on Quality of
Care for the Mentally Disabled
Albany Hearing

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The repair of roads greatly affects driving in rural areas. Over the past 20 years, these road networks have been allowed to deteriorate, and now must be fixed. While we applaud the Federal Highway Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement (HBRR) Program, the State Comprehensive Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS), and the "Rebuild New York State" road bond issue, more funding is desperately needed to repair our roads. A reduction or elimination of red tape attached to these grants, both HBRR and CHIPs, would allow us a freer hand in reconstructing these roadways. In order to design a project in accordance with federal specifications, for example, we must double the cost of what repair we would normally perform.

William J. Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

The CHIPS Program is an excellent idea, but there are several areas which should be addressed. One, of course, is the assurance of future funding. The passage of the Infrastructure Bond Issue has, I believe, made assurances for at least the remainder of the current program, but in order to properly plan for the ultimate correction of our many rural transportation problems, it would seem that some form of funding dedicated wholly to transportation would be in order. We must

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	collectively begin a concerted effort to provide a workable, adequate, and long lasting plan. Charles Meyer Sullivan County Commissioner of Public Works Monticello Hearing ********
• Priority assessment of bridges; declaration of impossibility of repairing them all.	It appears that in order to obtain assistance for effecting bridge repair, they must be over 20 foot in length... We are actively going out and seeking solutions for repairing smaller bridges on town roads. Some of these bridges haven't been touched (as far as rehab)... we haven't had the wherewithal to rebuild them. Austin McGrath Supervisor, Town of Grafton Troy Hearing ********
• Issue of incompatibility of federal, state, and local regulations in provision of public transportation and social service transportation coordination:	Even the small amounts of public transportation funds primarily available through Section 18 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act are underutilized in rural areas. There are several reasons for this, including inappropriate regulations governing the use of the monies, and our inability to coordinate the use of Section 18 monies with what are called Section 16(b)(2) monies (used to purchase vans for not-for-profit organizations serving the elderly and the handicapped). Indeed this was a major finding of our demonstration project conducted in Madison County with the Department of Transportation. Stockton Clark Director, RASP-NYS Office for the Aging Albany Hearing
- Incompatability of UMTA regulations for 16 (b)(2), Section 18 programs for areas such as Madison County, which are ready at the local level to coordinate transportation;	
- Lack of long-term funding for coordination out of Section 18 monies;	

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- Need to reanalyze the adequacy of existing incentives for coordination, and create new ones where necessary;

- Reluctance of many rural counties to "fight the bureaucratic battles" necessary to win Section 18 funding (planning requirements are too great).

- Need for state program to replace disappearing federal funds for transportation.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Mobility and quality of life in the rural areas go hand in hand, and the cost of autos and fuel in the last ten years has had a very serious impact on both. I think we desperately need an alternative to the auto that can service our outlying towns.

In other parts of the country and the state bus companies have been able to survive... If the government just stayed out of the way, we might be able to be successful in the transportation area.

Richard Lanza
Chairman
Sullivan Co. Private
 Industry Council
Monticello Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Guarantee of access to all parcels of land versus a program to make road and bridge abandonment occur in very remote rural areas.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

One of the problems of being a private, not-for-profit corporation, using a donation-only system of reimbursement, is that we are not eligible to receive Medicaid funds. However, we cannot receive community services money if we did operate on a fixed fee basis, so we are caught in the middle of conflicting agency policy.

We are aware of a similar situation that exists with regard to volunteer ambulance squads. If a person is transported by a commercial ambulance, they can be reimbursed by Medicaid, but if they go by way of a volunteer ambulance corps, Medicaid cannot reimburse them for a contribution. It's exactly the same principle, and I think it is one of those areas which the Commission needs to be concerned with and to acknowledge.

Susan Sloan
Director, Transportation Project
for Cayuga County
Auburn Hearing

My sole comment relative to this report is to respectfully direct attention to the potential of utilizing school district bus fleets to provide service to the rural community. Thirty-two years service as a school superintendent in schools of this state has given me realization that school buses more often rust out rather than wear out. These buses remain idle a goodly portion of the day and year. It, therefore, would be appropriate for this Commission to give innovative and serious consideration to the fuller utilization of these vehicles to serve the rural population.

William Demming
Rural Schools Program
Cornell University
Auburn Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- Investment mix of public dollars into highways, rail, water, air, etc.

  - Transportation is the artery of commerce and life in rural New York. Major emphasis should be given to the development of improved intermodal transportation linkages as well as enhancement of improved individual capabilities.

- Revise AASHTO standards on road building and maintenance where local conditions warrant.

- State purchase of lands to facilitate road and bridge abandonment in very remote areas (explore other state's approaches, e.g., Illinois).

- Make highways and feeder roads the primary emphasis in rural transportation.

Community Facilities, Housing, and Renewal

The business districts in rural villages can be referred to as the community center. When you tour upstate New York, a common image is generated of the rural villages. At the center of town stands some old buildings, some handsomely Victorian, and others remodeled beyond recognition. A frequent impression is that the centers of these towns have gotten rather shabby. There has often been loss of business to regional malls. Despite this negative aspect, the importance of the small downtowns must be recognized. The potential growth of these areas as centers for convenience retail, specialty retail, and service industries is very real.

John Grover
Regional Director
State of New York Mortgage Agency
Kingston Hearing

We have not been able to facilitate time-adaptive reuse of buildings. Schools are torn down instead of being recycled for needed uses in the 1980's. We need to become more familiar with concepts like home equity conversion and other mechanisms for housing recycling. Older people need to be assisted in remaining in their own home or in locating a more appropriate shelter. It is naive to think long range planning can exclude new construction or some form of subsidy. Many people simply cannot afford the cost of housing.

Barbara Lamphere
Executive Director
Cayuga County Homsite Development
Auburn Hearing

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Symposium Workshop Participants

Moderator:

Senator L. S. Riford, Jr.

Resource Person:

Harold S. Williams
President
The Rensselaerville Institute

Facilitator:

John LaRocca
Vice President
The Rensselaerville Institute

Recorder:

Barbara Margolis
District Aide, Greene County
Senator Charles D. Cook

Participants

James S. Carr
Director, Cayuga County
Planning Department

Stockton Clark
Project Coordinator, Rural
Aging Services Project
NYS Office for the Aging

James DeZolt
Chief of Local Assistance Program
Division of Construction Management
NYS Department of Environmental
Conservation

Maryanne Gridley
Legislative Analyst, Senate
Finance Committee

John R. Grover
Director, Albany Regional Office
State of New York Mortgage Agency

Robert McGinnis
Professor of Sociology
New York State College of
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George E. Messmer
Associate in Library Services
New York State Library

John Oster
Assistant Commissioner for
Rural Development
NYS Division of Housing
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Elizabeth Roetter
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Ronald M Roth
Director, Greene County
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Darryl Singer
Professor of Civil Technology
State University Agricultural &
Technical College at Delhi

Terrence G. Slaybaugh
Executive Director
Community Action in Self Help

Introduction

Community facilities and housing are vital to the successful growth and renewal of New York State's rural areas. If well planned, financed, properly timed, and carefully keyed to the community they can bring new jobs, higher income, and perhaps a fresh lease on life for communities and their residents.

In the real world, however, these requirements are not being met for many of New York State's rural communities. Of all the impacts of change on rural communities, population spillovers from other taxing jurisdictions have become the most insidious in rural New York. In outlying areas that are within commuting distance of job opportunities in other localities, for example, population influxes during the 1970's and 80's have come when least expected, hitting too fast too soon, and causing change that has only rarely been tailored to the rural community's needs. The attendant population pressure has often meant escalating costs for improvement of antiquated and often poorly maintained local roads, water and sewage systems, sanitation services, schools, and a host of other public services without having access to taxes from employers where residents work. The all-too-common result has been increased costs of living, higher taxes, and a serious squeeze on local government budgets and expertise, at a point in the development of rural areas when they are most vulnerable to outside "threats".

Too often, those who suffer most from inadequate community facilities and housing, and from increased taxes or property values are the long-term residents of New York State's rural areas who live on fixed incomes. Low-wage earners and the elderly have paid the highest price from population influx, with a tightened rental market and oppressive interest rates for home purchases, often without receiving a corresponding benefit. The mobile home market has expanded in response to this, but brings with it a special set of problems (e.g., quality of construction and facilities, energy inefficiency, and immobility of unit after parking).

A general insensitivity to the special nature and requirements of rural communities has in part been brought about by a lack of information and the application of metropolitan solutions, to rural problems. Moreover, the problems associated with upkeep and renewal of rural community facilities and housing have not received adequate attention.

Grants, the traditional federal and state response to local needs, when applied sensitively, are effective against all types of population impacts. They are most appropriate when local tax revenues cannot cover needed expansion and renewal of community facilities and housing without raising tax revenues excessively. The effects of some population spillover may require continued grants, loan guarantees, improved aid formulas, and shared state taxes to cover operating costs as well as investments costs. However, rural localities may not have the resources to be competitive in the grant application and review process.

Major goals are to develop a comprehensive data base and applicable approaches for rural communities and better use of existing state programs and personnel. It is hoped that this will lead to an equitable distribution of assistance to rural communities in New York State.

A major public policy issue is how to provide program guidelines so that urban solutions are not misapplied in rural areas where they don't fit or work. A related issue is how to provide rural residents more access to financial and technical assistance in meeting their community facilities and housing requirements.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends and Assumptions

- An increase in household formations in rural areas that creates an imbalance between demand and limited supply.
  - Decreasing family size may present difficulty in relation to maintenance of relatively large homes;
  - Increasing percentage of elderly family units;
  - Increasing overall demand for rental units;
- Increasing absorption of small local banks by larger state-wide institutions.
- Recent rise in foreclosure and abandonment -- leading to homeless families and visual blight.
- Increased breakdowns and problems with municipal water and wastewater facilities through years of inadequate capital investment and lack of knowledge about problems that exist.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The decline in the state's population is coupled with a decrease in household size across the state. The combination of these trends resulted in a seven percent increase in the number of households, with the most dramatic increases occurring in both suburban and non-metropolitan areas. The highest rate of growth, 29 percent, occurred in the most rural areas.

Michael Lenane
Deputy Commissioner
NYS Division of Housing and
Community Renewal
Albany Hearing

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With the advent of branch banking in New York State, we have seen most of our small local banks absorbed by the larger institutions.

James King
Director
Technical Assistance Center
SUNY Plattsburgh
Canton Hearing

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There is a policy at the federal level to deemphasize the making of new home loans and emphasize the rehab of existing homes. What that means, in fact, is a move in the foreclosure rate while families that are in need of single-family housing are not being served.

John Oster
Assistant Commissioner
NYS Division of Housing and
Community Renewal
Troy Hearing

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Many municipalities have limited resources to properly operate and maintain existing systems, many of which are reaching the end of their design life. I think one of the deficiencies we have at the local level is that we're dealing with volunteers in decision making roles.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Increased problems due to additional governmental regulations and requirements in such areas as fire and safety codes which often fail to differentiate rural risk from urban risk and conditions.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

They have very little information on the problems of groundwater control, and there seems to be resistance to understanding the implications of growth and how it affects water supply. We have to understand that the implications can be great.

Sally Mazzaralla
Dutchess County Planning Federation
Nevele Hearing

Most of the settled areas in the county have water systems. By settled I mean the places range in population of 35 people or smaller up to our largest village which has about 2500 people. Most of these systems are old. They have needs for upgrading; the supply might not be adequate, the storage capacity might not be adequate, and the transmission lines are leaking everywhere. The need for upgrading is simply enormous.

William Johnston
Director
Essex County Planning Board
Troy Hearing

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The state fire code was set up to solve the problems of Westchester County as a result of a great fire. I really don't think it has much relevance to the town of Petersburg, and yet that state fire code is uniform. I think that's an illustration of where the state in its rush to protect the public safety will sometimes implement something which really isn't relevant to the rural areas or even the suburban areas of the state.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Increasing housing development where municipal water and wastewater facilities are not available.

- Rising costs and increasing sophistication of firefighting equipment -- seriously impacting the limited tax base of rural fire districts.

- Increasing problems with local ability to provide social and human services due to the high cost of operating from old, and often inefficient, high-energy cost buildings.

- The general deterioration of downtown areas in many rural communities continues unabated.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Under current state law, subdivisions with lots smaller than five acres are reviewed by the State Health Department to insure that they are adequate for sewage and water. According to the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development, most recent land sales in the Catskills have been for 5.1 acres, and the Health Department regulations for sewer and water facilities are evaded.

The New York Times
9/7/84

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We have a new truck, a new tanker, and a new ambulance. However, we owe $142,000 on them.

Raymond Payne
Mayor
Village of Bolivar
Olean Hearing

Fire districts are given power to incur indebtedness and to levy taxes. Unlike other units of government, fire districts have neither constitutional debt nor tax limits, but do have spending limits. Fire district commissioners and other local officials are becoming increasingly concerned about limits of the real property tax as a major source of revenue.

Jerome Kornfield
Association of Fire Districts of
New York State
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- Sense of community and shared commitment to its well-being.

- Resourcefulness of community residents to solve problems:

    - Rural communities have a great potential to solve their own problems but are not given sufficient opportunity to do so.

- Economic self-sufficiency of many services.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

If we didn't have a preservation company behind us, or if we were a private sector operation, we could have given up long ago and the elderly housing would have to have been provided by new construction. The loss to the community through the loss of a historic building for elderly housing would have been very unfortunate. Why do we have to go through this torment for two years? Because there are people out there who know what the right thing to do is, and care.

William Johnston
Director
Essex County Planning Board
Troy Hearing

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A program such as the Rural Preservation Companies Program should be expanded to provide local residents the technical expertise necessary to upgrade rural housing. We feel the need out there, and yet the private sector has not really met that need. If one looks at the rural areas of this county, you will find that most of the need has in fact been met by the public entities.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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I'd like to turn now to the Division's point of view that housing is economic development. A distinction is often made between the two when policy questions are stated. It is our view that the construction industry is one of New York's major industries and programs that address housing needs and community development needs constitute that sort of economic development.

John Oster
Assistant Commissioner
NYS Division of Housing and
 Community Renewal
Troy Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• A general abundance of existing resources, including quantity and quality of water, housing stock, and such services as libraries, and emergency medical treatment.	From what I've seen, the market towns, the Oneontas and the Hudsons, end up as the centers for medical and social services, volunteer institutions, and religious institutions. They've met people's needs, traditionally. John Grover Regional Director State of New York Mortgage Agency Kingston Hearing ********
• Economies and virtues of the smaller scale: - Small projects may be more cost-effective.	The NYS Department of State has instituted a program to encourage local municipalities in undertaking small scale projects. The "Self Help" program will provide small communities tangible support services that will enable them to become involved in a range of cost-effective corrective actions when faced with the building and/or rebuilding of decrepit water and wastewater systems. Gail Schaffer NYS Secretary of State Schenectady Gazette 8/30/84 ********
• Beauty and heritage in the natural and community environment.	One of the strong points of the Hudson Valley is the historic background and cultural pride. The community has been able to protect that in the city of Kingston, with the historic uptown district, the Wall Street renovation, and the downtown area with the Maritime Museum. Herbert Heckler Director Ulster County Planning Board Kingston Hearing ********
• Good existing housing stock: - Including much historic housing stock which lends itself to the new investment stimulus provided by the investment tax credit.	While there is an abundance of housing stock in rural New York, areas that suffer from high unemployment or underemployment don't have the means to maintain the stock.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS Strengths (cont'd.)	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
	With three thousand out of the four thousand households in Ogdensburg earning less than $20,000, there is no possibility to build new housing. So, in fact, we are at a deadlock on housing. We have lost 100 units in the last decade. The rate of decay exceeds the rate of repair. Jack Milnes Executive Director Association for Neighborhood Rehabilitation Canton Hearing ********
• High percentage of owner-occupancy which promotes good maintenance (in general).	Owner occupancy is at a level of approximately 65 percent across upstate New York, and over 70 to 75 percent in many rural areas. John Grover Regional Director State of New York Mortgage Agency Troy Hearing ********
• Presence of larger metropolitan banks in the rural sector which provides an enhanced resource-lending potential.	Ultimately, the presence of larger banks might ease financing because the larger the bank, generally the better interest rate they can give you. It's been our experience that the smaller banks were unable to offer a rate that was competitive with some of the larger New York City banks. William Murphy Rensselaer County Executive Troy Hearing ********
• Well developed network of volunteer fire departments.	Volunteerism is one of the greatest resources of New York State. Over 90 percent of the fire service in rural New York is of a volunteer nature, including the service of the fire commissioners. Jerome Kornfield Counsel Association of Fire Districts of New York State Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Downtown areas with a potential for growth which, in addition to being the hub of commerce, provides a complementary set of convenience, retail, specialty retail, and government services.

- Community centers which provide:
    - convenience of retail services for residents living nearby;
    - generally, the greatest number of jobs in the immediate area;
    - lower commercial rental costs in underutilized space and the ability to act as an incubator for new local businesses (with facilities already available in many areas).

- Growth in available services.

- High health and safety standards which assure quality and performance in critical areas.

- General availability of land at affordable prices.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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When they revitalize a main street the tendency is to put in services; shopping, medical, and the others. Downtown becomes a real community service center. Also, the potential exists for development of rental housing units in small village downtowns. Obviously, there is much underutilized floor space above the store fronts in these areas.

John Grover
Regional Director
State of New York Mortgage Agency
Kingston Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- Inadequate information to trigger effective response to problems at the community level, and to allocate resources to local need at the state level:
  - State lacks the ability to make rational planning decisions in regard to resource allocation.
  - Poor statistics pertaining to housing conditions in rural areas [old plumbing and overcrowding statistics need to be supplemented or replaced with information relating to general housing conditions such as health and safety (e.g., wiring and heating systems)].
- Generally haphazard settlement patterns...and the inability and/or unwillingness to deal with them:
  - Cost savings for services could be realized if individual communities developed in a more rational fashion.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I really don't think that on a local level, the town or village level, that there is the capability to deal with housing problems. They are very complex, and if you are going to do anything of any scale, it's really quite an undertaking.

Barbara Lamphere
Executive Director
Cayuga County Homsite Development
Auburn Hearing

The state has programs to promote the relocation of industries in rural communities, but may not give enough attention to the impact of such a sudden expansion might have on such community facilities as sewers, water systems, highways and schools.

R. W. Groneman
Schenectady Gazette
9/27/83

While much of the older housing stock is in good condition, there are substantial portions that are sub-standard. The data does not really show this fact too well, because the only two measures or standards we have been able to quantify consistently over the years have been plumbing and overcrowding.

John Grover
Regional Director
State of New York Mortgage Agency
Troy Hearing

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You find in the county many small hamlets dotting the streams and rivers. Along one of our major rivers, the Bouquette River, there are five or six hamlets. Their current population may be 50 people.

William Johnston
Director
Essex County Planning Board
Troy Hearing

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- Older age of buildings and systems -- with resulting deterioration and high operating and energy costs:
    - Energy efficiency is substandard in many rural housing units since many homes were built in a time of inexpensive heating costs. These must receive extensive retrofitting in order to become affordable.
- Large segments of the rural population include moderate-income, working families, employed in factory, agricultural, and service industries. This group is being squeezed out of the housing market by:
    - Influx of middle and higher income householders, and second home owners;
    - Increased costs for purchase and maintenance of existing structures;
    - Increased costs of new construction;
    - Increased cost of borrowing money.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Our housing stock in this county and throughout the state, certainly predates many of the problems that we have had in more recent years, like energy consumption.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

Much of the existing housing in rural New York is quite old. Over half the housing stock in rural upstate was built before 1940.

John Grover
Regional Director
State of New York Mortgage Agency
Troy Hearing

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Lower middle and moderate income working people have, in the past, been able to afford owner occupancy through the purchase of modest one and two-family houses financed at relatively reasonable mortgage terms insured by FHA and VA. The major problem that we have is that this group has been incrementally cut out of the home purchase market over the past decade. This has been particularly aggravated in rural areas which are within commuting distance of major metropolitan areas. The suburban encroachment by middle and upper middle income buyers has made housing in these particular rural areas even more unaffordable to the more moderate income native population. This overall situation has created a problem in four effects:

> It's made owner occupancy much more difficult to attain;
>
> It has created a greater demand for rental housing units which are not there and are not being built.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Inadequate funds for rehabilitation of existing, and construction of new rural facilities.

- Discrimination, particularly at the local level, where certain kinds of residents (financially disadvantaged - welfare or disability recipients) are not acknowledged or welcomed.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

It has brought about an increased demand for mobile homes, and has reflected an increased demand for more reasonable mortgage terms.

John Grover
Regional Director
State of New York Mortgage Agency
Troy Hearing

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One problem with availability of adequate funding is that the federal government does not recognize New York State as a rural state. The federal programs are based on formulae that, because of the large population bases that we have, remove New York from significant funds.

Timothy Palmer
Executive Director
NYS Rural Housing Advocates
Troy Hearing

Areas for further innovation include the adaptive re-use of older structures and assistance for owner-builders. The latter are growing in numbers and they demonstrate one of the new ways moderate income families may acquire their own homes. Adaptive re-use is not new but holds great promise as a conceptual basis for legislation.

Michael Lenane
Deputy Commissioner
NYS Division of Housing and
Community Renewal
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Weaknesses (cont'd.)	
• Community facilities and housing costs that are too high and not well controlled.	Housing costs are rising very rapidly. Low and middle income families are being priced out of the market and are finding it more difficult to find affordable housing. This is especially true of the young and elderly who are having a very difficult time finding suitable housing. Government regulations contribute to the increasing cost of housing. Sally Mazzaralla Dutchess County Planning Federation Nevele Hearing ********
• Absence of acceptable sewage treatment facilities (i.e., functioning septic systems or wastewater treatment plants): - There is some evidence that rural public wastewater facilities are functionally deficient in both the treatment and storage of wastewater.	Water quality concerns me regarding sewage disposal. We have a number of small mill towns and because of the concentration of settlement, the predominance of clay soils and shallow bedrock depth, these communities are pockets of stream pollution. I'd like to see them cleaned up, but the system isn't geared up to solve these kinds of problems. William Johnston Director Essex County Planning Board Troy Hearing ********
• Excessive reliance on individual water supply systems.	In this county, more than half the people receive their water from wells in the back yard and not from the general municipal water source. William Murphy Rensselaer County Executive Troy Hearing ********
• Too many projects which mistakenly apply urban requirements and technologies to rural areas (e.g., sewage treatment plants, originally designed for urban areas, were not intended to be scaled down for small rural communities).	The problem is one that is intrinsic to government's attitude toward rural problems. Traditionally, rural problems have been viewed merely as an extension of urban problems. Urban oriented bureaucracy tends to, when a rural problem is identified,

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Inconsistent attitude towards the importance of community centers to rural communities.

- Downtown areas, as a whole, have deteriorated over the past several decades, often accompanied by a diminishing resource base, community pride, and identity:
  - May lack room for new commercial, public, and residential development;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

dig into the file drawer, find an urban solution, borrow Mayor Koch's expression and put a Sears suit on it, put it in a pick-up truck and head it upstate. They say it is a rural program, but they just don't address specific rural needs.

Timothy Palmer
Executive Director
NYS Rural Housing Advocates
Troy Hearing

For the amount of money that has been spent designing a scaled down urban style sewage collection and treatment system for the hamlet of Willsboro, they could have largely solved their problem. For the amount of money spent just on engineering work, they could have solved the problem with holding tanks or a clustered sewage system.

William Johnston
Director
Essex County Planning Board
Troy Hearing

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The lack of suitable community centers increases the cost of services for Headstart and senior center services. Facilities which are available are often limited in terms of services which can be provided there.

John Eberhard
Executive Director
Delaware Opportunities
Delhi Hearing

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Rural villages and the services they provide are an integral part of a healthy rural economy. Yet, many central business districts continue to deteriorate, lowering the quality of life for village residents, and many times forcing rural residents to travel longer distances for basic services.

Kim Blot
Director of Rural Affairs
NYS Department of Ag & Markets
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

  - Some primary commercial trade has been siphoned off by local and regional malls;
  - General failure to maintain consumer appeal;
  - Inadequate parking often requires massive clearing of existing structures in order to provide more space.
- High cost of telecommunications may increase the gap between rural and informational resources (e.g., smaller places cannot afford to access data systems for their libraries).
- Complicated federal (and at times state) regulations for retrofit and new construction.
- Insufficient agenda of priorities at the community level for allocating limited resources to what is most desired and needed...and lack of support for that agenda at higher levels of government.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Main Street is dead; it died years ago, and it's never coming back. While Main Street spent all those years dying, the shopping mall was slowly replacing it as the home of commercial activities Main Street once housed.

Russell Baker
New York Sunday Times Magazine
9/16/84

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Computer utilization and telecommunications present opportunities to enrich rural counties that have not been presented before. The concept of distance and availability is diminishing. However, will rural institutions have the funds to hire an expert in telecommunications and computer-assisted instruction? Probably not.

Dr. George Mack
Superintendant
Walton Central School District
Delhi Hearing

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We have been incapable of putting together comprehensive state programs which can focus on solution to rural problems. Clearly, the Urban Development Corporation and Housing Finance Agency have bonding requirements that virtually preclude their use in rural areas. It is hard to imagine a project located in a rural area qualifying for $10 million in financing from either agency. Having once been a bureaucrat myself, I have every confidence in saying that rural problems do not command the creative attention of very many policy makers in the executive branch of New York State government. Even among those who are concerned with rural issues, those issues are not the focus of their major efforts.

Timothy Palmer
Executive Director
NYS Rural Housing Advocates
Troy Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Safety and general building codes that do not reflect the rural context and actual risk.	I don't think the New York Uniform Fire Code really gets at the type of problem we have. It doesn't get at the rural type of fire problem and some effort should be made to identify what the rural fire hazard is and develop either regulations or procedures that address that problem. William Johnston Director Essex County Planning Board Troy Hearing ********
• Inappropriate mortgage lending policy -- in particular rural banks bought by urban ones which impose different and distant loan criteria: - Less capacity for decision making on the local level; - Decreased flexibility resulting from the use of "cookie-cutter" lending procedures.	The housing situation in rural areas can be affected by the overall change made in many local banks which have been taken over by statewide institutions. The disadvantages are in the fact that the power decisions are no longer made at the community level and do not take into consideration necessarily local needs in a situation. John Grover Regional Director State of New York Mortgage Agency Troy Hearing ********
• Lack of adequate rental housing units. Currently 25 percent of the rural population rents and this percentage is increasing.	Dynamic shifts in populations and local economies are overstressing many rural areas. One result is a lack of housing opportunities, particularly for the elderly and young families. While the rural rental assistance program provides some relief, we need to do much more. Using programs such as rural revitalization, and the small cities community development block grant, the state must be creative in persuading the private sector that rural rental housing markets are indeed viable. John Oster Assistant Commissioner NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal Troy Hearing ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Weaknesses (cont'd.)	
• Mobile homes may be the only housing alternative for an increasing number of households.	Often mobile homes are really the only affordable source of additional housing in support of a new family foundation in the rural area. John Grover Regional Director State of New York Mortgage Agency Troy Hearing ********
• Major cuts in federal subsidies for rental housing.	Very few new apartment units are being built because of the high cost of construction on the one hand, and the relatively low attainable rents on the other. With the cutbacks in subsidies to rental unit production programs by Washington, these factors have greatly slowed the production of any rental units. John Grover Regional Director State of New York Mortgage Agency Troy Hearing ********
• Inconsistent zoning practices.	Four municipalities in Sullivan County and five in Ulster County are without zoning. Neighboring Orange County has zoning in all its municipalities. Middletown Times Herald Record 7/31/84 ********
• Inadequate housing options for the elderly.	There is a lack of adequate, affordable rental housing throughout the county. This problem is particularly severe for the elderly. Opportunities for developing senior housing are limited by the lack of developable land within the community where facilities are convenient; hence, even if federal and/or state assistance were available, construction of housing units needs to be coupled with a service delivery system. John Eberhard Executive Director Delaware Opportunities Delhi Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Inadequate service delivery or incentives within some existing programs (e.g., Farmers Home Interest Credit Program).

- Lack of acceptance, particularly at the state and federal level, of alternative and innovative solutions: (e.g., New York's pilot Rural Aging Services Program was responsible for the state receiving one and one-half times its allocation of Farmer's Home Administration Section 504 grants in 1983. A proposal which would have extended the usefulness of the program beyond 1984 was vetoed).
  - Slow technology transfer does not allow best use and benefit of public facilities and programs;
  - Need for more risk taking and divergent thinking.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Another problem relating to the inadequacy of housing options is that of the house rich elderly. I refer to those people who live alone in two or three story houses. With their children gone they often find themselves unable to maintain these large houses because of financial or physical reasons. With alternative living arrangements, a senior citizen could return the house to the market and use the equity to establish themselves in a housing facility designed to meet their unique needs.

Frank Mandy
Policy Analyst
NYS Association of Homes and
Services for the Aging
Albany Hearing

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I think there needs to be an understanding somehow conveyed to these federal and state funding sources that if they are going to make programs potentially available in rural areas, they have to make a longer term commitment to those programs.

John Eberhard
Executive Director
Delaware Opportunities
Delhi Hearing

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Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Create a mechanism for equitable distribution of state and federal support for housing and community facilities between urban and rural areas:
    - Should create a baseline formula for allocation of funding;
    - Current methods such as the Community Development Block Grant are inappropriate.

- Revise "uniform" fire, building, and health codes, as well as zoning regulations to differentiate for the rural context.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

A formula is needed to fairly distribute state and federal support between urban and rural areas. The formula would have to be based on need—population, poverty level, number of low and moderate income persons, unemployment and other factors. We need a situation where each county is assured of a certain minimum amount of money, and needier counties would receive a larger amount.

Mary Verlaque
Director
St. Lawrence County Planning Board
Canton Hearing

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The Uniform Fire Code would be better accepted in rural areas if a couple of points had been paid attention to. It would have been a simple matter to establish an appeals board at the county level. Certainly we have the expertise here. Also, many rural towns don't have zoning and find it offensive that they were forced to accept the entire code, including building construction on single family homes.

Frank Liguori
Planning Commissioner
Tompkins County
Auburn Hearing

I agree with the observation that we need to redefine or at the very least enhance the definition of substandard housing. In my opinion the present (uniform) definition resulted in an astonishing improvement of conditions in housing overnight. Lacking complete plumbing and overcrowding is hardly an accurate measure of a unit's suitability. A complicating factor is that most rural areas don't have housing codes, and therefore we don't have a standard to measure by.

Barbara Lamphere
Executive Director
Cayuga County Homsite Development
Auburn Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Develop a comprehensive data base for state government and communities, as the lack of data in rural areas currently puts them at a disadvantage. Data resources are needed to enhance their capacity to compete for government funding.

- Create a one-stop service on state programs and operations for rural communities.

- Formulate a clear state policy for development programs which provides incentives for alternate approaches to solving rural problems on rural terms (including increased volunteerism and program innovation).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Consolidation of the state's effort in rural community development would increase our ability to identify federal funds that currently do not come into the state. If New York put its efforts into a consolidated rural development agency, those federal funds wouldn't go in other directions. I would like to make a proposal for the formation of a state office of rural development. That office could, in fact, be responsible as the clearing house and administrative agency for such programs as the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program and could provide the state with access to federal dollars tht we have not had before.

Timothy Palmer
Executive Director
NYS Rural Housing Advocates
Troy Hearing

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In our local effort to invest grant monies to earn additional resources for home owner assistance, we find ourselves limited by wasteful inconsistancies among government agencies. Investment of grant money is allowed by HUD but is not allowed by Health and Human Services. We find a similar prohibition in the State Division of Housing and Community Renewal against investing their grant monies to serve our programmatic purposes. These are wasteful policies that can serve no one. We at the local level are working hard to develop solutions to innumerable problems of this sort. Invariably, they could all be made a easier by a little more thoughtfulness and imagination in the corridors of Albany and Washington.

Mark Scarlett
Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Housing Council
Canton Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Provide greater rental accessibility to those with low, fixed incomes (including the elderly):
  - Allow the conversion of existing structures to include accessory units;
  - Provide better financial assistance for rental housing development.
- Initiate a formal review, and if necessary, an adjudication process to ensure that all state programs fit appropriately to rural circumstances.
- Revise zoning controls to produce better quality mobile home development.
- Increase capital availability to rural communities for facility renewal.
- Coordinate technical assistance to rural communities (supportive, non-regulatory, and problem solving).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The implications for housing and community development are clear. We must find ways to house an increasing poor, often elderly population in areas where the existing housing stock is frequently over 40 years old. Downtown redevelopment is similarly handicapped by aged and depressed local economies. I would suggest the Commission carefully analyze the Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act of 1983. The federal law not only amends many existing programs but creates several new opportunities for rural New York, including the HUD Rental Rehabilitation program and the Farmers Home Administration Rural Housing Preservation Program. I encourage you to look at strategies which ensure that New York's rural residents receive their full allocation of federal dollars.

Michael Lenane
Deputy Commissioner
NYS Division of Housing and
Community Renewal
Albany Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Provide less expensive financing programs for owner-occupants.

- Complete a plan in each rural community to solve its facility problems, as well as a capital improvements budget for implementing that plan.

- Encourage joint management functions such as sales promotions and recruitment of new businesses to improve the retail mix.

- Strive to maintain quality and availability of facilities in rural communities (especially those experiencing high growth).

- Encourage rural communities in their efforts to renew and preserve downtown areas.

Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• How to define program guidelines differently for rural areas so that urban solutions are not insensitively applied where they don't fit or work.	We don't need and won't benefit from the creation of additional agencies in Albany. We need, instead, for existing agencies to develop the flexibility and sensitivity to provide us in rural New York with the resources we need to get on with our job of improving the rural quality of life. Nancy Casey Housing Coordinator St. Lawrence County Community Development Program Canton Hearing ********
• How to provide more equity, so that rural residents get their share of state and federal resources (e.g., Community Development Block Grant).	The problem remains whether under state or federal government, the competitive sweepstakes of grantsmanship is beyond the means of much of rural New York. How much administrative money would the state require to pass the CDBG program through to the counties on an entitlement basis? Already our metropolitan communities enjoy the continuity and local control of CDBG entitlement. Why not the rest of the state? Let the counties decide how to administer and award these resources. There is no level of government more capable of carrying out such a function, or more accessible to the needs of its rural constituents than the county. Mark Scarlett Executive Director St. Lawrence County Housing Council Canton Hearing ********
• How to provide locational incentives such that rural residents locate in places where existing infrastructure and services are in place.	Located on the perimeters of rural hamlets are some beautiful family homesteads that could accomodate three or more people and could provide services not accessible within the local hamlet. Also there are other underutilized buildings such as schools, hospitals, parcels on state land, and factories that could be adaptively reused for housing.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Should state and local governments participate in the development of more appropriate wastewater disposal technologies for rural areas?
- How can alternative technologies and approaches that are more generic to rural areas be better encouraged?
- Should the state develop and actively implement funding mechanisms for water and wastewater systems in rural areas?

- Should programs be developed to meet the finance needs of owner-participated construction?
- Should incentives be given to create mechanisms for development of housing for young families in rural areas? What are the barriers within existing programs offered by H.U.D., and FmHA?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

These structures will remain vacant until sufficient incentives are developed to recycle them. Such an effort will require not only the Senate and Assembly developing the necessary legislation, but also the state agencies who are concerned with housing, housing finance, human services, health, and taxation to work together to implement these programs.

Stockton Clark
Rural Aging Services Program
 Coordinator
NYS Office for the Aging
Albany Hearing

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Some of the technologies we have come across, in searching the available automated data bases, indicate that there is a large volume of technological capability out there to replace the brick and mortar that go into sewage treatment and water systems. I think the funding perspective of the state should be flexible and allow for these more favorable approaches.

James King
Executive Director
Technical Assistance Center
 SUNY Plattsburgh
Canton Hearing

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For young, old, and otherwise, the greatest barrier to new housing is the cost of financing. We have received nearly $400,000 in grant monies to assist low and moderate income persons in self-help housing construction. Although the owners are contributing an estimated $170,000 worth of their labor, they still have to contribute more than $210,000 in financing. The barriers to such financing are considerable and it remains to be seen whether we can cross them.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How to tap the capacity for volunteerism and local initiative that is latent in small towns and rural areas, in harmony with state and federal supports.

- Should controls be developed as a prerequisite for installation of private on-site water supply and disposal, to ensure continued quantity and quality of ground water supplies?

- Is increased growth a given for much of rural New York and if so, what impact will it have on the individual community's ability to provide adequate housing, and service facilities?

- How can access to private capital be improved for housing and community facilities (e.g., bond markets)?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Banks are naturally skittish about owner/builders. We need a source of low-interest short-term construction loans to bring these projects to a mortgageable state of completion, where banks no longer have to fear the prospects of shoddy or incomplete work.

Mark Scarlett
Executive Director
St. Lawrence Co. Housing Council
Canton Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- What roles should downtown areas play in the future rural community? What assistance and encouragement should state government and private interests provide to local communities in an effort to preserve and enhance downtown areas?

Government and Management

The rural constituency of New York State needs in Albany the same rights and attention granted to urban residents. It needs to have a voice that is there to listen, on the one hand, in order to bring services; and on another to be able to see that action is taken when it's needed and appropriate. At the moment, rural communities lack this consideration in public policy arenas. Each area has its own representatives in both the Senate and Assembly that provide for individual constituents' and communities' needs. As it is very well documented in this report, rural policy has heretofore been non-existent.

Thomas Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
  and Development
Delhi Hearing

While our rural population has grown during the last decade and the urban areas have lost people, the government priorities and mandates for county governments, set by the New York State Legislature, have remained static - concentrated primarily upon urban populations. A new attitude toward rural areas must be promoted and promulgated in the Legislature. By reducing your mandates and by increasing financial aid and technical assistance, you can allow us, the front line providers of service, to realign our priorities and to give a greater amount of attention to rural problems.

William J. Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

Symposium Workshop Participants

Moderator:

Senator Jess J. Present

Facilitator:

Frank J. Mauro
Secretary to Ways and Means Committee
New York State Assembly

Resource Person:

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Professor
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Participants

Honorable Gerald Benjamin
Ulster County Legislator

C. Waring Blackburn, Jr.
Director of Planning
Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill

Donald F. Clifford
Coordinator of Research and Development
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Honorable John S. Patane
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Introduction

Local governments have played an important role in the life and development of rural New York State. The state, as sovereign authority, has delegated vital governance, management, and public service responsibilities to local municipalities.

In 1981, there were 44 counties, 32 cities, 727 towns, 324 incorporated villages, and 3,124 special purpose local governments in rural New York. Rural county governments spent most of their revenues (52.6%) on economic assistance. The largest single expenditure for town governments was transportation (48.1%). Cities and villages in rural areas spent the largest single share of their funds on water, sewer, and other home and community services. These expenditure patterns reflect the major functional responsibilities for each unit of local government, although other important services are provided by each.

Some people feel there is a need to revitalize rural local government. Others view it as being too expensive, somewhat ineffective, unnecessarily duplicative, and therefore, in need of modernization. Indeed, another layer of multi-county public and private regional agencies has been interposed between state and local governments over the past two or more decades. These both compliment and complicate traditional principles of local governance and management as well as dilute a previously stronger state-local partnership.

Very little restructuring or revitalization of local governments has, in fact, occurred in New York State in recent decades. Between 1971 and 1981, for example, five villages and one town were dissolved in rural areas. Indeed, one new village was created during this period. The most significant change has been reapportionment of rural county legislatures, prompted by the

Supreme Court's "one-man-one-vote" decision.

A restructuring of federal-state-local relations and responsibilities is currently being demanded because of the shift toward governmental decentralization in American society. If the recent reversal of the previous trend towards centralization of government at the federal level continues, the major forum for future public policy will lie within state and local governments. Paralleling this movement has been the responsibility to raise additional revenues at the local level and the mounting burden of state mandates thrust upon local governments.

Probably the single most important challenge for state policymakers during the next several years will be to improve the state-local governance and management partnership, and to restore the focus of the state-local relationship that has been lost in recent years.

Many rural municipalities are experiencing extreme difficulty in their efforts to adapt to current societal needs and trends. Moreover, the state has come to be identified as a master/controller rather than partner/enabler in local government activities. Indeed, many local governments prefer to work with "Washington" rather than state agencies. A recent example is the proposed state administration of the U.S. Community Development Block Grant Program, a move which has been vehemently opposed by rural localities in New York State. Such a partnership is perceived as threatening and inadequate for rural localities.

There are important strengths inherent in local governance in rural New York. These include: close proximity to the citizenry; the "non-intrusiveness" of rural local government; a "common sense" approach to community problem-solving; existing part-time elected officials who are willing to work long hours for low wages; and the ability of rural government to enlist private and voluntary talent and support for local projects (e.g., a fundraiser for a town building destroyed by fire). In addition, there is a cadre of resource agencies, associations, and educational institutions with the potential to offer assistance to conscientious local government officials.

Still, a general feeling of isolation, alienation, and helplessness is felt in many rural localities. Local government officials and citizens are confronted continually by such outside forces as developers, "experts," and state and federal government bureaucracies. Most local government officials are not trained in government management and may be at a disadvantage in serving their constituents. Few existing state or federal agencies have rural citizens and government as their primary constituency. Most new multi-county regional agencies have their locus and dominant focus on metropolitan areas. A generally discouraging climate currently exists for potential "movers and shakers" to seek community betterment through rural local government.

There are significant limitations or flaws in the current state-local government partnership. First, there are legal impediments to cooperation between local government bodies in such matters as joint ownership of equipment as a cost-saving device. Secondly, a generally inadequate local financial resource and tax base is further compounded by aforementioned state mandates. In addition, relatively small rural governments frequently encounter difficulty when competing for categorical grants-in-aid, since aid formulas and planning regions oriented to metropolitan areas tend to discriminate against small rural governments. In addition, impediments to intergovernmental cooperation are often built into state and federal revenue programs. Structurally, new forms of rural local government would be more appropriate for some localities, but current laws and aid formulas create disincentives to such change.

Rural local governments are plagued by frequent turnover among elected and appointed officials. For example, there is a one-third turnover rate among town supervisors every two years. Low salary levels and part-time work have made it extremely difficult to attract and retain qualified local officials and to provide continuity in leadership. Most officials are required to wear "many hats" and are bogged down by time and energy-wasting activities, such as bookkeeping by hand. Public resistance to land use controls (a traditional responsibility of local government under home rule statutes) and extreme pressure from developers often impede efforts to preserve the quality of life in rural communities.

A major goal is to improve the capacity for governance, management, and the delivery of services by local governments in rural areas. Through increased technical assistance and training for local officials, it is hoped the principle of home rule will be preserved and an improved state-local partnership will be realized. In order to achieve this aim, one of the partners (local government) needs to become more equal if it is to exercise greater local leadership, management, and cost-effective delivery of services in light of current and future societal needs.

What should be done in order to ensure the future viability and capacity of local municipalities to govern and provide essential services in rural areas? Are there state and local programs that should be cut back or turned over to the private sector in view of increasing pressures on local government officials to manage and finance added responsibilities? These are only two issues which currently challenge policymakers. How the various political actors respond to the changing nature and interdependency of federal, state, and local government will have important implications, not only for the future delivery of services to rural New York residents, but also for the quality of life of all people of the state.

Where Rural New York Is Today

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
Trends and Assumptions	
• Escalating burden of state mandates on local governments, many of which are uniformly applied and therefore are not sensitive to the individual needs and demands of rural localities. • The State has come to be identified as master/controller rather than partner/enabler in local government activities.	State efforts in many areas would serve rural New York better were they directed more at providing technical, problem solving and financial support to local decision makers, and less at setting mandates and regulatory limits. Mark Scarlett Supervisor Town of Rossie Canton Hearing ********
• Increased reliance on grassroots solutions to local problems and needs in response to inadequate federal and state aid.	Answers to rural problems must be worked out by the people who live in rural areas, or are informed and acquainted with rural life and the ways it can be enriched in local or regional terms. Craig Gilborn Director Adirondack Museum Canton Hearing ********
• Rise of a post-industrial information society with emphasis on high technology as a major component of future management practices (e.g., increased demand for computer utilization in local government management).	We have the Rural Towns Management Cooperative where seven town and one village have gotten together. They have bought two computers and we're providing the manpower. Already we're beginning to see interest in people taking over this function themselves, and learning more about computers and the possibilities that new technology offers. Waring Blackburn Director of Community Assistance Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill Nevele Hearing ********
• Fewer qualified citizens are willing to enter local government service, either in professional or political roles.	This lack of citizen participation may be caused by the part-time nature of the jobs, low pay, or lack of autonomy from the state. Several towns in the lower Hudson Valley have decided to operate with only one justice and some places are having trouble filling assessors positions. Walton Reporter 9/26/84

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Increasing frustration of part-time elected officials as to the amount of time required to perform their duties in local government.

- Increasing recognition that professional management assistance is imperative to the smooth functioning of rural local governments. However, there is decreasing ability to afford it, with the present structure and financing of local government.

- Increasing reliance by part-time elected officials on outside, often urban-oriented consultants and technical expertise for advice on problem-solving and management.

- Increasing numbers of ad hoc, business, political, and administrative actors and agencies involved in land use planning and environmental concerns affecting rural localities.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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I think it's important to recognize that local officials are largely volunteers. Even if they're elected and get a salary, it's a very small one for most people. They put in a lot of time and effort, and the frustration level is increasing for them.

Waring Blackburn
Director of Community Assistance
Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill
Nevele Hearing

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Demands for time and expertise have increased while the time and expertise of local government managers has not. Thus, local governments have turned to outside consultants who are usually expensive and frequently ineffective. One small community spent $13,000 to have a Community Development Block Grant application prepared for them and they didn't receive funding. For a community of 600 people, that's a lot of money to put up.

John Eberhard
Executive Director
Delaware Opportunities
Delhi Hearing

The Village of Smyrna spent $750 for a consultant to prepare a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant application, and they received nothing. The money could have been better spent elsewhere.

David Raimy
Mayor
Village of Smyrna
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Trends and Assumptions

- Decreasing state financial assistance as a share of rural local government revenue.

- Increased reliance on such special purpose districts as lighting, water, and sewer for the maintenance and delivery of vital services (e.g., between 1971 and 1981 there was a net gain of 238 special purpose districts in rural localities).

- Increased public resistance to large, centralized governments that administer and coordinate programs directly affecting local people.

- Shift in the role of the chief elected executive in many of rural New York's local jurisdictions. The strong, informed leadership of such officials has become increasingly critical to the smooth and effective management of community development and day-to-day local government affairs.

- Heightened public awareness of the increasingly serious problems associated with local management and intergovernmental relations in rural New York. This is due to the strong influx of people into rural areas. Established residents have been content to let their local governments run, while newcomers have forced them to be more responsive.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths and Assets

- Inherent strengths of local government in rural areas:
    - Close proximity of local elected officials to the citizenry (e.g., there are 25 county legislators for every 100,000 people in rural counties and 4 for every 100,000 people in metropolitan counties).
    - The "non-intrusiveness" of rural local government;
- Other governmental resources:
    - Subcounty rural government assistance (e.g., The Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill's "circuit riders" and technical assistance services);

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Management, whether business or government, must stay close to the customer. Groups learn from the people they serve. Many of the best ideas come from customers, and this comes from listening on a regular basis. It's an important ingredient of small rural government. You, as the representatives of the governments closest to the people have a good opportunity for doing this.

Dr. Richard E. Mark
Chairman
Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill
Tug Hill Local Government Conference
5/16/84

The non-intrusiveness of rural local government is mirrored by the rural citizenry, and their non-intrusivesness into the operation of the government. There seems to be a general lack of citizen interest and participation in community planning in rural areas. A major reason for this is the part-time nature of local government.

Tom Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
and Development
Delhi Hearing

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The Tug Hill Commission has provided valuable lessons for the state by enabling towns to work together in a cooperative effort in planning, enforcement and administration of zoning and other regulations. It has improved communication between local government, the state, and the counties. We've assisted many municipalities. We have a technical assistance file of over 2,000 cases. We spend an awful lot of time on legal matters, planning and zoning regulations, and a full range of questions that are fed to us by our circuit riders.

Waring Blackburn
Director of Community Assistance
Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill
Nevele Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Strengths (cont'd.)

  - County government (e.g., help and hands-on expertise provided by county budget officers and officials from county planning departments);
  - State agencies and regional governing bodies (e.g., Department of State, Department of Audit and Control, Department of Health, Department of Environmental Conservation, Regional Planning and Development Agencies, etc.) with jurisdiction over matters pertaining to rural governments;

- Significant potential for educational institutions in rural New York to assist local governments.
  - The State University of New York is the largest and most diverse public multi-campus university system in the nation. Over fourteen institutions offering baccalaureate and graduate degrees, the Cooperative Extension Service at Cornell University, five Agricultural and Technical Colleges and thirty community colleges are located in rural counties (e.g., The Local Technical Assistance Program at SUNY Plattsburgh and the Local Government Institute at Cornell University).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

When the local governments reach a desperation point, they'll turn to the county. The social services and medical services are handled by the county and not the local level because of the complexity of the programs.

Herbert Heckler
Director
Ulster County Planning Board
Kingston Hearing

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With local planning being cut back because of a lack of funding, the state has picked up a greater share of the responsibility. They haven't supplied a great deal of money, but have provided regulations to guide us.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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Our SUNY campuses represent an under-utilized resource. Many of the campuses are located in rural communities. The faculty and staff represent an expertise that's available for technical consultation. The colleges provide an educational resource that should be invaluable for skill enhancement.

Dr. David Huntington
President
SUNY Ag and Tech College
 at Alfred
Olean Hearing

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- At the secondary level, adult education classes and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) have been instrumental in offering a variety of technical knowledge and expertise to rural residents.
- More than twenty independent colleges and universities offering diverse programs and disciplines are located in rural areas.

- Private and voluntary resources unique to rural New York:
  - Existing part-time elected officials who are willing to work long hours for low wages. The average salaries for mayors and trustees in New York were $2,881 and $1,411 respectively.
  - Ability of rural governments to enlist private and voluntary talent, support, assistance, and enthusiasm for local projects from such sources as banks and business firms, service organizations, private contractors and senior citizens (e.g., the Village of Corbett, New York, with the help of local government and non-profit corporations, built their own water system with volunteer labor, in the late 1970's).
  - Informal assistance, (e.g., a fundraiser for a town building which was destroyed by fire).

- The "common sense" approach of rural citizens to community problem-solving. This is best illustrated by the "Self Help" method of community renewal that allows local government to remain autonomous, make necessary repairs to community facilities, and not go deep into debt for consulting, contracting, and supplies.

- Other governmental resources: (cont'd.)
  - Federal government departments and programs, including grants and other forms of technical and financial assistance (e.g., United States Department of Transportation, Farmers Home Administration, Soil Conservation Districts, and U.S.D.A. Office of Rural Development Policy).
- Associations of municipal officials (e.g., New York State Association of Counties, New York State Association of Towns, New York State Conference of Mayors, New York State Planning Federation. These organizations publish newsletters and bulletins with timely articles on government and management, conduct training courses and seminars, and represent the interests of local governments before the Legislature in Albany).

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses and Problem Areas

- A generally discouraging climate within which potential "movers and shakers" can seek community betterment through local government.

- Relatively few existing state and federal agencies or resource groups have as their primary constituency rural citizens and rural governments.

- Legal:

    - State mandates, especially those applied uniformly throughout the entire State without regard for the needs of rural New York, its part-time government, and local citizenry (e.g., the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code);

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Local leaders will continue to be skeptical of any state declaration of deference to local judgement, when time and again we discover the state voting no confidence in our competence. We need look no further for a recent example of this than the state's new administrative procedures for the uniform fire code, which provides no mechanism for a local board of review.

Mark Scarlett
Supervisor
Town of Rossie
Canton Hearing

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It's very well documented that in Albany, rural policy doesn't exist. There have been a number of attempts by the state to have a rural perspective. The governor tried it when he was Secretary of State, with the Rural Affairs Council. Gail Schaffer has tried to continue it. However, there is no real entity in Albany that deals with upstate New York.

Tom Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
and Development
Delhi Hearing

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In enforcing the laws regarding elected assessors, the state hasn't taken into account the part-time nature of the position, due to other full-time obligations. The state doesn't realize that in these rural areas, you have assessors who have other businesses and cannot take time off and go to school.

John Charlesworth
Albany Times Union
10/4/84

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Ultra vires ("exceeding their authority") acts committed by local officials applying "common sense" solutions to problems;

- Lack of adequate legal advice. For example, in some localities of the State, town attorneys are not aware of the intricacies of municipal, land use, or environmental law. This is because many towns, as clients, are often too small to justify keeping abreast of such laws;

- Complex, often disorganized system of state laws pertaining to local governments (see study by New York State Legislative Commission on State/Local Relations);

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

In August, the State Board of Equalization and Assessment removed Mansfield assessor John R. Charlesworth, a gravel business operator, from office because he did not complete the second part of the two-part training. Two weeks after the state ousted him from his $1,200-a-year job, the Mansfield Town Board reappointed him to his old job. The State demanded that Mansfield remove Charlesworth and make a proper appointment in accordance with the intent of the law.

Albany Times Union
10/4/84

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There are real gaps in communication in government. This is a problem not only with the lay people but with attorneys. The planning law is so complex that most attorneys are not familiar with it, unless they specialize in it. They don't have the expertise to know it in its entirity. It's scattered all over the place and they're not familiar with all the pieces of law that actually exist.

Waring Blackburn
Director of Community Assistance
Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill
Nevele Hearing

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The state law and its many interpretations are complex and confusing. We're having more trouble with the DEC than you can shake a stick at. Buffalo will tell you one thing, and Albany will tell you another thing. Nobody puts anything in writing, and their feasibility studies are out of this world.

Ray Dickinson
Supervisor
Town of Franklinville
Olean Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Traditional local government boundary lines having no current rational basis and leading to inefficient/ineffective service delivery (e.g., many historical boundaries were along streams, which results in splitting valleys between municipalities. Others were "straight-line" arbitrary boundaries, which often bisect communities. Many long-standing fire district boundaries are outmoded today);
- Difficulty in legally closing rural roads, especially on a seasonal basis (e.g., a dead-end road with vacation/weekend occupants);
- Impediments to intergovernmental cooperation (e.g., lack of legal forms for joint ownership of equipment);
- State government insistence that local governments adhere to certain rigidly prescribed types of operations rather than performance standards (e.g., The C.H.I.P.S. Highway Improvement Program);

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The challenge is to make local communities and municipal officials aware of impact and opportunities beyond municipal boundaries. Scenic, recreational, and natural resources don't stop at municipal boundaries.

Loretta Simon
Hudson Valley Heritage Task Force
Kingston Hearing

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I look with interest on one particular community here in Sullivan County that's currently attempting to close a bridge. The bridge is just not necessary from our standpoint. However, to close it becomes a complicated mechanism in accordance with all of the state laws.

Charles Myers
Commissioner
Department of Public Works
Sullivan County
Monticello Hearing

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Forestburg has a lot of tourism. We have a state park in the town that's inaccessible from Forestburg but is accessible from the town of Thompson. No one can use it because we're stymied by the negotiations that were supposed to take place for the purchase of the rights.

Paul Rausch
Supervisor
Town of Forestburg
Monticello Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Financial:
  - General lack of financial resources required to support needed and/or mandated local facilities and services. Most rural localities fell significantly below New York State's 1980 average per capita income of $7,500 (see Appendix);
  - Grant-in-aid programs have been built on an ad hoc basis without a systematic review of priorities.
  - Increasing importance, but declining share of federal and state aid to rural localities. (e.g., although the total dollar amount of state aid to local governments in rural areas increased 99% between 1971 and 1981, the local share of this aid as a source of total revenue declined from 22% to 17%. Reliance on federal aid dollars during the same period increased significantly from 14% to 21% of total local revenues. However, there have been sharp cutbacks in federal aid since 1981:

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

We have a small section of road; actually we only have a half mile in the whole village. That gives you an idea how big the village is. There are three sawmills, a feed mill, and a school. The whole village depends on the road, and it's in very, very bad shape. There is not enough money to fix it up. In fact, there is no way a small village like ours can fix it up the way it needs to be.

David Raimy
Mayor
Village of New Smyrna
Delhi Hearing

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If we could ask you to do one thing, it would be to reduce the mandate that occurs in county government, so that we could then use the money in accordance with the priorities that our constituency would like to see.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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Medicaid places a burden upon county government in this state. Certainly it's been somewhat, at least temporarily, alleviated by the introduction of the bill last year which provided for 90 percent state share over a three-year period of long-term care. That will help us, but there's something that I must point out to you, and that is that the greatest single impact on our real property tax is the local share for Medicaid. What has been done by the State Legislature is a temporary balm on a long-range problem. At the end of a 10-year period, even though our costs will shrink from 25 percent to 10 percent of long-term cost, that 10 percent will exceed what we were paying the first year of take-over.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Excessive reliance on the general property tax as an income generator for support of rural local government, including: political unpopularity during times of land value inflation; failure of full valuation assessment; its regressivity; competition for property tax funding from public elementary and secondary education; and the proliferation of tax-exempt and tax-sheltered properties (e.g., local governments in rural areas increased real property taxes 111% between 1971 and 1981. The increase in metropolitan areas during this same period was 82%;)

- Unpredictability and late payment of state aid to localities;

- Difficulty encountered by relatively small rural governments and agencies when competing in categorical grant-in-aid programs. Generally, aid formulas based on population, type of government, Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and Planning Regions oriented to metropolitan counties tend to discriminate against rural governments;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Tax exempt properties take 32 percent of the real estate in New York State off tax rolls, and place an added burden on local taxpayers. St. Lawrence County has a large amount of state-owned land and university property, and Clinton County with Plattsburgh Air Force Base and a state university campus, lead the state with 55 percent of their property wealth exempt from taxation.

Albany Times Union
10/18/84

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The state has addressed part of the problem of late payment by passage of the Prompt Payment Law in 1983. The law requires the state to pay its contractual debts within 45 days of receipt of a correctly submitted voucher. Delays in other aid payments (reimbursement) still need to be dealt with.

New York State Municipal Bulletin
New York State Conference of Mayors
November, 1984

The state has a lot of funding programs to encourage activities, but the state is not very good about the way that it distributes the funds. Timely payment by the state of New York in your programs would help tremendously. Why are we paying interest on funds borrowed to operate the program when the state could be more timely in its payment?

Mary Verlaque
Director
St. Lawrence County Planning Board
Canton Hearing

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Even the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program has an urban bias in the sense that communities that have concentrated areas of problems tend to be looked at more highly in their application than more spread out areas.

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- Structural:
  - Overemphasis on traditional forms of local government without much thought being given to providing for new alternatives (e.g., non-chartered county governments are plagued by fragmentation of administrative and policy authority, caused by having part-time legislators who control individual operating departments through a committee structure);
  - Impediments to intergovernmental cooperation built into state and federal revenue programs.
- Managerial:
  - Local officials often lack expertise and training in public management techniques;
  - Most post-secondary public administration or planning training programs offer students little direct field experience or educational content in rural affairs;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

If you aren't going to address areas of large population, you tend not to do as well with most of the funding programs.

Paula Osseni
Economic Development Supervisor
Sullivan County Planning Board
Monticello Hearing

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We act alone much too often. There is a real benefit to regional approaches to see where there are legitimate communities of interest and where we can resolve problems together. We don't all have the same problems, but by the same token, many of the same services can benefit us if we are able to take advantage of them together.

Tom Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
and Development
Delhi Hearing

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We have our neighbors, our friends who we have given the responsibility of providing us with governmental services. We expect them to operate as professionals, and they are in many cases, people who were elected to a job with no training, just a desire to serve their community.

Tom Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
and Development
Delhi Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Frequent turnover among elected and appointed officials (e.g., there is a one-third turnover rate among town supervisors every two years);

- Complex public labor-relationships, especially the Public Employees' Fair Employment Act (Taylor Law) and system of collective bargaining which have caused a loss of local control in dealing with employees;

- Low salary levels and part-time work which have made it difficult to attract and retain high quality local government officials and that tend to discourage year-to-year continuity in leadership (e.g., the average salary for a part-time rural legislator/supervisor in 1980 was $5,500. In metropolitan areas, the average salary was $13,000. The corresponding salaries for Board Chairman were $9,200 and $17,000, respectively);

- Insufficient training, information, and time available to local officials often leading to non-action;

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

  - Geographic isolation which causes extensive travel and communication costs for local officials seeking to find answers to problems or exchange ideas with their peers;

- Technical Assistance:

  - Counties now provide limited technical assistance to towns and villages. However, current laws giving such authority and responsibility are obsolete;

- Land Use Controls:

  - Public resistance to land use controls and disputes over the best types of environmental controls often impede efforts to preserve the quality of life in communities;

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There are some points in this county you can go 77 miles and still be in the county. We are bigger than several states.

Joseph Sears
St. Lawrence County Office
for the Aging
Canton Hearing

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At the present time, we have jurisdiction only over those matters which are delegated to us by local government. The county itself does not have the authority to establish any order or to tell an individual town what it can or cannot do.

William Murphy
Rensselaer County Executive
Troy Hearing

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Seven years ago, Neversink (Sullivan County) overwhelmingly rejected zoning at public hearings. That marked the last time the issue was publicly discussed in Neversink, one of only nine municipalities in the region without zoning. Four are in Sullivan County and five in Ulster. However, people want to be protected. They don't want to move into a community where someone can open up an auto body shop or a junk yard right next door.

Herbert Heckler
Director
Ulster County Planning Board
Middletown Record
7/31/84

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- A general feeling of isolation, alienation, and helplessness on the part of local government officials and citizens in their efforts to deal with societal trends, and such outside forces as developers, "experts," and state and federal government bureaucracies.
  - Local governments in rural areas are concerned about the increasing threat of federal and state encroachment on their land-use control powers (e.g., Adirondack Park Agency, River Basin Commissions);
  - Confusion in state enabling legislation, with need for recodification.
  - High unit costs imputed to delivery of required services in sparsely populated rural areas often result from using metropolitan-oriented criteria or approaches in the delivery of services. Moreover, in some instances, services may simply have to cost more in order to provide an equitable quality of life for rural residents;
  - Financial constraints on local revenue raising powers (e.g., statutory and constitutional debt and tax limits);

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Differing fiscal years for various types of local governments and the State (e.g., the State's imposition of higher mandated future housing allowances to social service recipients following passage of county budgets in the previous year);

- Distribution of sales tax revenue (e.g., towns and villages have no voice in such determinations);

- Revenue sharing formulas that discourage consolidation of small political units (e.g., between 1971 and 1981, five villages and one town government were dissolved in rural New York. See case study on Village of Roserdale in Appendix);

- Some debt and tax limitations are unnecessarily restrictive for responsible local government administration.

- Conflicting authority (chain of command) of elected officials (e.g., elected positions of supervisor and highway superintendent);

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Weaknesses (cont'd.)

- Due to scarce resources or lack of technical assistance, local officials and personnel are required to wear many hats and to get involved in many time or energy-wasting activities (e.g., record-keeping and bookkeeping by hand).

- Need for better communications and linkages between those with problems and those who can help.

- United States Supreme Court decisions extending the scope of the Civil Rights Act of 1971 in which states and political subdivisions were stripped of immunity for the actions of their public servants.

- Lack of readily available training services;

Goals For Rural New York

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Financial: - Ensure that rural areas receive an equitable share of state and federal aid;	We request that the Governor change the state aid base from the 1970 census level to the 1980 census level. This will give an honest value to the rural towns, which now are one fifth of the state's population. Austin McGrath Supervisor Town of Grafton Troy Hearing
- Review the priorities and applicability of existing State grant-in-aid programs with respect to the State's rural areas;	The needs of local governments are diverse. In providing the services to our local governments, I have emphasized the importance of responsiveness to changing problems, as well as to special circumstances confronting each locality. We need flexibility in all public policy.
- Review the Local Finance Law and constitutional debt and tax limits in order to balance necessary local government financing and borrowing power while preserving adequate restraints that encourage prudent management;	In a time of increasing demands on local governments, we ought to take a look at the way that we are funding local governments. We should be willing to look at options, at other points to consider when we design programs. Gail Schaffer NYS Secretary of State Albany Hearing ********
• Legal: - Ensure that the special needs and problems of rural areas are considered when promulgating federal and state administrative rules and regulations;	Above all, we can insist upon what I call "administrative sensitivity" on the part of state and federal bureaucracies. Local government officials, after all, are generally not full-time professional administrators. State and federal governments ought to be reasonable, for example, in designing forms as straightforwardly as possible, without compromising the integrity of programs. Our task is to see to it that state policies and priorities reflect the respect that rural New York is due. Gail Schaffer NYS Secretary of State Albany Hearing ********

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Find ways to maximize the use of state and federal aid received by rural local governments;
- Provide incentives to encourage intergovernmental cooperation;
- Improve assessments of rural properties;
- Ease the burden caused by tax-exempt property in rural areas.

- Legal:
  - Broaden local discretionary authority in order to encourage innovation in the use of federal, state and local resources for problem-solving or service delivery;
  - Simplify and recodify municipal statutes in order to eliminate overlap and multiplicity and promote appropriate sharing of services/equipment;

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Structural:
  - Develop the capacity to recognize, support, and nourish small rural governments
  - Establish a state-local partnership for change that shares risk and increases the payoff and probability that rural local governments will be successful in their efforts to remain contemporary and cost-effective;
- Managerial:
  - Promote additional professional management services for rural local governments in order to give them the ability to successfully manage growth and change.
- Education and Training:
  - Expand continuing education services and communication networks for elected and appointed officials in rural governments in order to assist them in performing their responsibilities more efficiently and effectively (e.g., contract courses in cooperation with community colleges).

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The potential for rural New York to contribute even more powerfully to the quality of life and the economic stability of our state is practically unlimited. Like most resources, this one needs to be nurtured and deserves the commitment on our part to understand and respond to the problems that beset our rural areas.

Gail Schaffer
NYS Secretary of State
Albany Hearing

Partnerships are invaluable. We can no longer expect the government to do it all for us and we need to bond together those partnerships. I think the critical need in that is coordination and initiative. Very often our resources exist in isolation and don't join together to find a common way of action.

Tom Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
and Development
Delhi Hearing

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I'm a supporter of local government and doing things at the local level, but I think there is a need for assistance for those local decision makers. They need training and technical assistance backup to deal with a very complex set of laws.

Waring Blackburn
Director of Community Assistance
Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill
Nevele Hearing

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Technical Assistance:
  - Increase the availability and accessibility of technical assistance to localities, geared to the special needs of rural local governments.
- Improve the capacity for governing and delivering services in rural areas.
  - Maximize the use of volunteers, private, and service organizations through removal of legal impediments;
  - Promote congressional review and amendment of Section 1983 of the United States Civil Rights Act of 1971 in order to reverse the 1980 United States Supreme Court decision extending the scope of the section;
  - Adopt a system of true home rule that promotes participatory democracy and permits multiple options in meeting local needs and carrying out statewide goals as a substitute for overly proscriptive mandates.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

There needs to be some system for providing advisory, managerial, administrative, and information services and assistance to local governments. There needs to be some assistance programs that rely on the expertise of a number of individuals who can bring their expertise to the local residents, who may have their own program to pull themselves up by the boot straps.

Whitty Sanford
Executive Director
Overcast Agricultural Center
Delhi Hearing

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- Eliminate unnecessary duplication of services and equipment, including redundancy associated with traditional local government boundary lines;

- Facilitate the removal of barriers to state/local co-operation (e.g., overlapping responsibilities and regulations among the different State agencies that impact or result in mandates for local governments);

- Develop the capacities of rural local governments to deliver appropriate services that will meet current and future public demands;

- Institute uniform government fiscal years geared to the state fiscal year in order to insure greater predictability in forthcoming state aid;

- Adequate state financial aid to local units of government for costs associated with state mandates;

- Simplify application procedures for aid programs;

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Goals (cont'd.)

- Develop adequate communication networks and management systems for all levels of government, using "high technology" where appropriate, with "high touch" to make it work.

- Reduce the importance of the property tax as a source of local government revenue;

Public Policy Issues

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS	PUBLIC COMMENTARY
• Financial: - Existing formulas for categorical grants-in-aid tend to favor larger metropolitan communities. How can smaller rural communities, facing increased demands for service delivery, be provided an equitable share in aid programs applicable to their jurisdictions?	Increased recognition should be given to the efforts of local governmental units in assessing local needs and administering programs to meet them. Current planning and funding mechanisms often define treatment and support programs that are so population-specific that they all but eliminate rural counties from participation in them. In addition, such programs often require staffing levels and service demands that require an economy of scale unattainable in both the planning and implementation of programs that fit a wide variety of patient needs in individual demographic and geographic situations. Funding mechanisms similar to the community supported system funding streams must be broadened and expanded to include support of programs serving rural citizens who have been maintained in the community remarkably because of the flexibility already demonstrated by rural mental health programs operating far beyond their designated program certification. Stephen Dunham Director Delaware County Community Mental Health Services Delhi Hearing
	I would like to note the proposal for the state to take over the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program. This proposal includes a rural set-aside that clearly represents a commitment to our smallest rural community. Gail Schaffer NYS Secretary of State Albany Hearing
- In times of shrinking resources, how can the demands for services created by the demographic shifts that are occurring in rural New York State be met in a cost-effective and fair manner?	I think it is valuable to have an evaluation of the existing programs to determine if they are meeting the needs of the rural people in the state. Are the needs being addressed? It's a good question. Do the programs seem to be an efficient use of the state's dollars?
- Are there state or local programs that should be cut back in view of decreasing resources?	

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- How serious must the financial conditions of rural local governments become before required changes are implemented? What are the economies and diseconomies of scale for service delivery in the major functional areas of local government?

- Structural:
  - What are the State's responsibilities as an enabler/partner in helping rural areas wrestle with and develop viable management strategies for growth and change?
  - How viable is the growing array of small service delivery units in local government?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I think I could say yes, the money is being well spent in most cases, but I'm sure there are programs where the dollars aren't getting the desired effect. We need to look at ourselves from time to time.

Tom Miner
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Conservation
 and Development
Delhi Hearing

We've all come up against the municipal request about absorption of services, and one thing we have to look at is how we do the absorbing. The rural schools group out of Cornell University has suggested that there is a scarcity of students per mile in rural areas. Rather, we have to think in terms of scarcity of services available. Basic services have to be provided and it is of great concern to me.

Assemblyman Richard Wesley
136 A.D.
Olean Hearing

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We are eager to work with local governments that are interested in engaging in inter-municipal cooperative agreements, particularly in rural areas. This is an avenue that provides real potential for innovative solution. I believe the state of New York — all of it — would be well served if financial incentives were made available to encourage local governments to consider economies of scale in the delivery of services, strictly at local option.

Gail Schaffer
NYS Secretary of State
Albany Hearing

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- Is the strength of traditional voluntary institutions in rural New York increasing, decreasing, or remaining constant? How much untapped potential and energy really exist?

- Managerial:
  - What new public management systems should be developed as models that show how to simplify the tasks and improve the effectiveness of local officials?

- Technical Assistance:
  - How can existing state agencies update their missions or alter their priorities in providing technical assistance, education and training to local governments (e.g., change in role from "mandate enforcer" to partner and facilitator)?
  - How can the expertise of the private sector, including the use of volunteers and other resources, be better utilized?

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

- How can relationships between the State, rural counties, towns, and villages be strengthened? What guidelines should be considered in instituting any new system of intergovernmental co-operation?

- How can such multi-county governmental functions, such as planning and development or transit, best be performed in rural areas?

- How can technology be used to enhance the delivery of technical assistance to local governments?

- What is the future role of the shared municipal "circuit rider" as a town manager, or a technical assistance deliverer?

- Should rural counties be given a stronger role in providing technical assistance to towns/villages?

- Would a decentralized system of technical assistance be more efficient and effective than a centralized one (e.g., county or joint municipal technical assistance offices vs. an Office of Local Government)?

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

I see a need for a cooperative effort of the community, the county, and the state, working to provide planning for our rural areas. I think that this is basically the first step in the endeavor. Things are changing too quickly for communities to be able to address their problems without strong planning and an approach to solving the rural problems and to addressing the issues and opportunities. I think that because we are so spread out, segmented and isolated, that we have to begin working in a concerted cooperative manner.

Whitty Sanford
Executive Director
Overcast Agricultural Center
Delhi Hearing

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We must recognize the growing need for technical assistance to small governments, in matters such as preparation of applications and package proposals. The funds that can be available to those kinds of processes should be a real tool for rural New York. We can make use of mechanisms such as the "circuit-rider" concept that has been used so effectively by the Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill.

Gail Schaffer
NYS Secretary of State
Albany Hearing

(The circuit rider concept can raise the capabilities of very small governments to a point where they can begin to compete on equal terms with larger cities and towns. Otherwise, without technical help, tiny, underfunded municipalities administered by harried people working part time, are outside of the possibilities for grants or the influence enjoyed by every other place. What happens is that these small communities seem not to exist. They may believe that they have control, but in reality they are powerless. An investment with county or state funds in technical assistance and in the person-to-person help of a circuit rider may be a small price to pay for equal opportunity for small places).

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SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Policy Questions (cont'd.)

- What should be done to preserve and enhance the participatory approach to local government, protect minority interests, and promote effective and efficient management practices? For example, through the Rural Town Management Cooperative, the Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill is able to provide computer assisted financial management to seven towns and one village in the Tug Hill Region. This assistance provides officials with more time for forward thinking, instead of bookeeping; improves other management areas (accounting, cash management, budgeting, capital planning, etc.); and allows local governments to evaluate the use of a computer in their regular management routine.
- How can aid formulas be amended in order to encourage appropriate consolidation, cooperation, and long-term capital planning?
- How can quality legal services best be provided rural areas? Should there be a process of certification for municipal attorneys?
- How can the need for codification of all statutes affecting municipal government best be addressed?

Symposium Retreat Program

I think there is strength in unity. If we can pull ourselves together, I think we will have a larger say in what happens in New York State. Our voice, as separate rural entities, will be stronger if we work together. The best way to unify ourselves is to plan for the future, to survey our resources, to explore ways of gaining managerial and administrative expertise in order to coordinate regional efforts.

Whitty Sanford
Executive Director
Overcast Agricultural Center
Margaretville, New York
Delhi Hearing

Statistical information and other data are limited in rural areas, therefore making it impossible to adequately develop plans and programs. For example, in considering youth employment, information remains unavailable which would permit the development of a pragmatic program to address the problem. As a result, the Private Industry Council and others operate without specific direction.

John Eberhard
Executive Director
Delaware Opportunities
Delhi Hearing

RURAL FUTURES

FIRST STATEWIDE LEGISLATIVE SYMPOSIUM ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

SPONSORED BY

THE NEW YORK STATE
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON RURAL RESOURCES

INSTITUTE ON MAN AND SCIENCE, RENSSELAERVILLE, N.Y. OCTOBER 5-7, 1983

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1983

3:00 - 5:30 P.M.	REGISTRATION - *Straus Residence*
4:30 - 5:30 P.M.	Commission Chairman meets with Moderators, Resource Persons, Facilitators, Recorders. *Straus Residence, Lower Lounge*
5:30 - 6:30 P.M.	RECEPTION – CASH BAR *Weathervane Restaurant*
6:00 P.M.	DINNER
7:30 - 8:30 P.M.	Welcome by Senator Charles D. Cook and introduction of Honored Guests. Keynote address by the Honorable Frank W. Naylor, Jr., Under Secretary for Small Community and Rural Development, U.S.D.A. *Guggenheim Pavilion, Auditorium*
8:45 - 10:00 P.M.	Planning Session for each Workshop Group at assigned locations.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1983

7:30 - 8:30 A.M.	BREAKFAST - *Weathervane Restaurant*
9:00 - 10:45 A.M.	Introduction of Honored Guests Senator Charles D. Cook PLENARY SESSION: "Meet the Press" *Guggenheim Pavilion, Auditorium* *MODERATOR:* Willard Phillips, Jr. Director, Office of Rural Development Policy, U.S.D.A. *PANELISTS:* Corinne Kuypers-DenLinger Director of Research, The Naisbitt Group, Washington, D.C. Paul Eberts Associate Professor of Rural Sociology, Cornell University Calvin Beale Director, Population Section of the Economic Research Service, U.S.D.A. Resource Persons for workshop groups quiz the "experts" about state and national trends that will challenge current thinking on rural development.
11:00 A.M. - 12:45 P.M.	Seminar Group Workshop Discussions resume at previously assigned locations.

WORKSHOP TOPIC	LOCATION
Transportation	Conference Room #1 *Guggenheim Pavilion*
Education	Conference Room #2 *Guggenheim Pavilion*
Agriculture	Conference Room #3 *Guggenheim Pavilion*
Government & Management	Master Seminar Room *Guggenheim Pavilion*
Human Relations and Community Life	Auditorium *Guggenheim Pavilion*
Business, Economic Development, Employment	Upper Lounge *Straus Residence*
Community Facilities, Housing & Renewal	Lower Lounge *Straus Residence*
Health Care	Dining Room *Huyck House*

	Environment, Land Use, Natural Resources	Meeting Room *Tidy Castle*
12:45 P.M.	LUNCH – *Weathervane Restaurant*	
1:45 - 4:30 P.M.	Seminar Group Workshop Discussions resume at previously assigned locations.	
4:30 - 5:30 P.M.	FREE TIME	
5:30 - 6:00 P.M.	CASH BAR	*Weathervane Restaurant*
6:00 P.M.	DINNER	
7:00 - 7:30 P.M.	FREE TIME	
7:30 - 9:00 P.M.	Seminar Group Workshop Discussions resume at previously assigned locations.	
9:00 - 10:00 P.M.	Resource Persons, Facilitators & Recorders remain to review day's proceedings.	

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1983

7:30 - 8:30 A.M.	BREAKFAST - *Weathervane Restaurant*
8:30 - 10:30 A.M.	Seminar Group Workshop Discussions resume at previously assigned locations. Complete Symposium Report and prepare Executive Summary for Commission Hearing.
10:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.	PLENARY SESSION: "Commission Hearing" Resource Persons report to Commission Members the findings of the Seminar Discussions. *Guggenheim Pavilion, Auditorium*
1:00 P.M.	ADJOURN
	LUNCH
2:00 - 3:00 P.M.	Post-Symposium Evaluation Commission Chairman meets with Moderators, Resource Persons, Facilitators & Recorders. *Guggenheim Pavilion, Master Seminar Room*

HONORED GUESTS

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New York State Senate

Honorable Alfred B. DelBello
Lieutenant Governor
State of New York

Honorable Joseph Gerace, Commissioner
Department of Agriculture and Markets
State of New York

Honorable Gail S. Shaffer
Secretary of State
State of New York

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The Commission wishes to extend a special thank you to John A. La Rocca, Vice President of the Institute on Man and Science, and the members of his staff for their assistance and cooperation in making arrangements for the Symposium and its participants. In addition, we are sure everyone will join us in expressing our appreciation to our Recorders: Charlotte Austin, Elizabeth Blair, Judy Dagostino, John Hamilton, Peter Lopez, Barbara Margolius, Alexander Mathes, Mabel Osterhoudt, Maryann Riviello.

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